VOLUME IV

JEAN PAUL
WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT
AUGUST WILHELM SCHLEGEL
FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL
NOVALIS (FRIEDRICH VON HARDENBERG)
FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN
LUDWIG TIECK
HEINRICH VON KLEIST

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THE GERMAN CLASSICS

Masterpieces of German Literature

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

ON THE ELBE NEAR SCHRECKENSTEIN CASTLE

Patrons' Edition

IN TWENTY VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

THE GERMAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY
NEW YORK

From the Painting by Ludwig Richter

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NEW YORK

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VOLUME IV

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The Life of Jean Paul.

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The Early Romantic School.

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Lucinda; Fair Eckbert; Hymn to Night.

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The Opening of the Will; Schiller and the Process of His Intellectual Development; Michael Kohlhaas.

LILLIE WINTER, A.B.:
The Story of Hyacinth and Roseblossom; Puss in Boots.

LOUIS H. GRAY, Ph.D.:
Aphorisms (By Schlegel).

THOMAS CARLYLE:
Quintus Fixlein's Wedding.

C. T. BROOKS:
Rome.

JOHN BLACK:
Lectures on Dramatic Art.

FREDERIC H. HEDGE:
Aphorisms (By Novalis); The Elves.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

FROM this volume on, an attempt will be made to bring out, in the illustrations, certain broad tendencies of German painting in the nineteenth century, parallel to the literary development here represented. There will be few direct illustrations of the subject matter of the text. Instead, each volume will be dominated, as far as possible, by a master, or a group of masters, whose works offer an artistic analogy to the character and spirit of the works of literature contained in it. Volumes IV and V, for instance, being devoted to German Romantic literature of the early nineteenth century, will present at the same time selections from the work of two of the foremost Romantic painters of Germany: Moritz von Schwind and Ludwig Richter. It is hoped that in this way The German Classics of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries will shed a not unwelcome side-light upon the development of modern German art.

Kuno Francke.

JEAN PAUL

THE LIFE OF JEAN PAUL

By Benjamin W. Wells, Ph.D.
Author of *Modern German Literature*.

"THE Spring and I came into the world together," Jean Paul liked to tell his friends when in later days of comfort and fame he looked back on his early years. He was, in fact, born on the first day (March 21) and at almost the first hour of the Spring of 1763 at Wunsiedel in the Fichtelgebirge, the very heart of Germany. The boy was christened Johann Paul Friedrich Richter. His parents called him Fritz. It was not till 1793 that, with a thought of Jean Jacques Rousseau, he called himself Jean Paul.

Place and time are alike significant in his birth. Wunsiedel was a typical German hill village; the ancestry, as far back as we can trace it, was typically German, as untouched as Wunsiedel itself, by any breath of cosmopolitan life. It meant much that the child who was in later life to interpret most intimately the spirit of the German people through the days of the French Revolution, of the Napoleonic tyranny and of the War of Liberation, who was to be a bond between the old literature and the new, beside, yet independent of, the men of Weimar, should have such heredity and such environment. Richter's grandfather had held worthily minor offices in the church, his father had followed in his churchly steps with especial leaning to music; his maternal grandfather was a well-to-do clothmaker in the near-by town of Hof, his mother a long-suffering housewife. It was well that Fritz brought sunshine with him into the world; for his temperament was his sole patrimony and for many years his chief dependence. He was the eldest of seven children. None, save he, passed unscathed through the privations and trials of the growing household with its accumulating burdens of debt. For Fritz these trials meant but the tempering of his wit, the mellowing of his humor, the deepening of his sympathies.

When Fritz was two years old the family moved to Joditz, another village of the Fichtelgebirge. Of his boyhood here Jean Paul in his last years set down some mellowed recollections. He tells how his father, still in his dressing gown, used to take him and his brother Adam across the Saale to dig potatoes and gather nuts, alternating in the labor and the play; how his thrifty mother would send him with the provision bag to her own mother's at Hof, who would give him goodies that he would share with some little friend. He tells, too, of his rapture at his first A B C book and its gilded cover, and of his eagerness at school, until his too-anxious father took him from contact with the rough peasant boys and tried to educate him himself, an experience not without value, at least as a warning, to the future author of *Levana.* But if the Richters were proud, they were very poor. The boys used to count it a privilege to carry the father's coffee-cup to him of a Sunday morning, as he sat by the window meditating his sermon, for then they could carry it back again "and pick the unmelted remains of sugar-candy from the bottom of it." Simple pleasures surely, but, as Carlyle says, "there was a bold, deep, joyful spirit looking through those young eyes, and to such a spirit the world has nothing poor, but all is rich and full of loveliness and wonder."

Every book that the boy Fritz could anywise come at was, he tells us, "a fresh green spring-place," where "rootlets, thirsty for knowledge pressed and twisted in every direction to seize and absorb." Very characteristic of the later Jean Paul is one incident of his childhood which, he says, made him doubt whether he had not been born rather for philosophy than for imaginative writing. He was witness to the birth of his own self-consciousness.

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JEAN PAUL

" One forenoon," he writes, " I was standing, a very young child, by the house door, looking to the left at the woodpile, when, all at once, like a lightning flash from heaven, the inner vision arose before me: I am an *I*. It has remained ever since radiant. At that moment my *I* saw itself for the first time and forever."

It is curious to contrast this childhood, in the almost cloistered seclusion of the Fichtelgebirge, with Goethe's at cosmopolitan Frankfurt or even with Schiller's at Marbach. Much that came unsought, even to Schiller, Richter had a struggle to come by; much he could never get at all. The place of " Frau Aja " in the development of the child Goethe's fancy was taken at Joditz by the cow-girl. Eagerness to learn Fritz showed in pathetic fulness, but the most diligent search has revealed no trace in these years of that creative imagination with which he was so richly dowered.

When Fritz was thirteen his father received a long-hoped-for promotion to Schwarzenbach, a market town near Hof, then counting some 1,500 inhabitants. The boy's horizon was thus widened, though the family fortunes were far from finding the expected relief. Here Fritz first participated in the Communion and has left a remarkable record of his emotional experience at " becoming a citizen in the city of God." About the same time, as was to be expected, came the boy's earliest strong emotional attachment. Katharina Bärin's first kiss was, for him, " a unique pearl of a minute, such as never had been and never was to be." But, as with the Communion, though the memory remained, the feeling soon passed away.

The father designed Fritz, evidently the most gifted of his sons, for the church, and after some desultory attempts at instruction in Schwarzenbach, sent him in 1779 to the high school at Hof. His entrance examination was brilliant, a last consolation to the father, who died, worn out with the anxieties of accumulating debt, a few weeks later. From his fellow pupils the country lad suffered much till his courage and endurance had compelled respect. His teachers were conscientious but not competent. In the liberally minded Pastor Vogel of near-by Rehau, however, he found a kindred spirit and a helpful friend. In this clergyman's generously opened library the thirsty student made his first acquaintance with the unorthodox thought of his time, with Lessing and Lavater, Goethe and even Helvetius. When in 1781 he left Hof for the University of Leipzig the pastor took leave of the youth with the prophetic words: "You will some time be able to render me a greater service than I have rendered you. Remember this prophecy."

Under such stimulating encouragement Richter began to write. Some little essays, two addresses, and a novel, a happy chance has preserved. The novel is an echo of Goethe's *Werther*, the essays are marked by a clear, straightforward style, an absence of sentimentality or mysticism, and an eagerness for reform that shows the influence of Lessing. Religion is the dominant interest, but the youth is no longer orthodox, indeed he is only conditionally Christian.

With such literary baggage, fortified with personal recommendations and introductions from the Head Master at Hof, with a Certificate of Maturity and a *testimonium paupertatis* that might entitle him to remission of fees and possibly free board, Richter went to Leipzig. From the academic environment and its opportunities he got much, from formal instruction little. He continued to be in the main self-taught and extended his independence in manners and dress perhaps a little beyond the verge of eccentricity. Meantime matters at home were going rapidly from bad to worse. His grandfather had died; the inheritance had been largely consumed in a law-suit. He could not look to his mother for help and did not look to her for counsel. He suffered from cold and stretched his credit for rent and food to the breaking point. But the emptier his stomach the more his head abounded in plans "for writing books to earn money to buy books." He devised a system of spelling reform and could submit to his pastor friend at Rehau in 1782 a little sheaf of essays on various aspects of Folly, the student being now of an age when, like Iago, he was "nothing if not critical." Later these papers seemed to him little better than school exercises, but they gave a promise soon to be redeemed in *Greenland Law-Suits*, his first volume to find a publisher. These satirical sketches, printed early in 1783, were followed later in that year by another series, but both had to wait 38 years for a second edition, much mellowed in revision — not altogether to its profit.

The point of the *Law-Suits* is directed especially against theologians and the nobility. Richter's uncompromising fierceness suggests youthful hunger almost as much as study of Swift. But Lessing, had he lived to read their stinging epigrams, would have recognized in Richter the promise of a successor not unworthy to carry the biting acid of the *Disowning Letter* over to the hand of Heine.

The *Law-Suits* proved too bitter for the public taste and it was seven years before their author found another publisher. Meanwhile Richter was leading a precarious existence, writing for magazines at starvation prices, and persevering in an indefatigable search for some one to undertake his next book, *Selections from the Papers of the Devil.* A love affair with the daughter of a minor official which she, at least, took seriously, interrupted his studies at Leipzig even before the insistence of creditors compelled him to a clandestine flight. This was in 1784. Then he shared for a time his mother's poverty at Hof and from 1786 to 1789 was tutor in the house of Oerthel, a parvenu Commercial-Counsellor in Töpen. This experience he was to turn to good account in *Levana* and in his first novel, *The Invisible Lodge*, in which the unsympathetic figure of Röper is undoubtedly meant to present the not very gracious personality of the Kommerzienrat.

To this period belongs a collection of *Aphorisms* whose bright wit reveals deep reflection. They show a maturing mind, keen insight, livelier and wider sympathies. The *Devil's Papers*, published in 1789, when Richter, after a few months at Hof, was about to become tutor to the children of three friendly families in Schwarzenbach, confirm the impression of progress. In his new field Richter had great freedom to develop his ideas of education as distinct from inculcation. Rousseau was in the main his guide, and his success in stimulating childish initiative through varied and ingenious pedagogical experiments seems to have been really remarkable.

Quite as remarkable and much more disquieting were the ideas about friendship and love which Richter now began to develop under the stimulating influence of a group of young ladies at Hof. In a note book of this time he writes: "Prize question for the Erotic Academy: How far may friendship toward women go and what is the difference between it and love?" That Richter called this circle his "erotic academy" is significant. He was ever, in such relations, as alert to observe as he was keen to sympathize and permitted himself an astonishing variety of quickly changing and even simultaneous experiments, both at Hof and later in the aristocratic circles that were presently to open to him. In his theory, which finds fullest expression in *Hesperus*, love was to be wholly platonic. If the first kiss did not end it, the second surely would. "I do not seek," he says, "the fairest face but the fairest heart. I can overlook all spots on that, but none on this." "He does not love who *sees* his beloved, but he who *thinks* her." That is the theory. The practice was a little different. It shows Richter at Hof exchanging fine-spun sentiments on God, immortality and soul-affinity with some half dozen young women to the perturbation of their spirits, in a transcendental atmosphere of sentiment, arousing but never fulfilling the expectation of a formal betrothal. That Jean Paul was capable of inspiring love of the common sort is abundantly attested by his correspondence. Perhaps no man ever had so many women of education and social position " throw themselves " at him; but that he was capable of returning such love in kind does not appear from acts or letters at this time, or, save perhaps for the first years of his married life, at any later period.

The immediate effect of the bright hours at Hof on Richter as a writer was wholly beneficent. *Mr. Florian Fälbel's Journey* and *Bailiff Josuah Freudel's Complaint Bible* show a new geniality in the personification of amusing foibles. And with these was a real little masterpiece, *Life of the Contented Schoolmaster Maria Wuz*, which alone, said the Berlin critic Moritz, might suffice to make its author immortal. In this delicious pedagogical idyl, written in December, 1790, the humor is sound, healthy, thoroughly German and characteristic of Richter at his best. It seems as though one of the great Dutch painters were guiding the pen, revealing the beauty of common things and showing the true charm of quiet domesticity. Richter's *Contented Schoolmaster* lacked much in grace of form, but it revealed unguessed resources in the German language, it showed democratic sympathies more genuine than Rousseau's, it gave the promise of a new pedagogy and a fruitful esthetic; above all it bore the unmistakable mint-mark of genius.

Wuz won cordial recognition from the critics. With the general public it was for the time overshadowed by the success of a more ambitious effort, Richter's first novel, *The Invisible Lodge.* This fanciful tale of an idealized freemasonry is a study of the effects in after life of a secluded education. Though written in the year of the storming of the Tuileries it shows the prose-poet of the Fichtelgebirge as yet untouched by the political convulsions of the time. The *Lodge*, though involved in plot and reaching an empty conclusion, yet appealed very strongly to the Germans of 1793 by its descriptions of nature and its sentimentalized emotion. It was truly of its time. Men and especially women liked then, better than they do now, to read how " the angel who loves the earth brought the most holy lips of the pair together in an inextinguishable kiss, and a seraph entered into their beating hearts and gave them the flames of a supernal love.'' Of greater present interest than the heartbeats of hero or heroine are the minor characters of the story, presenting genially the various types of humor or studies from life made in the ''erotic academy'' or in the families of Richter's pupils. The despotic spendthrift, the Margrave of Bayreuth, has also his niche, or rather pillory, in the story. Notable, too, is the tendency, later more marked, to contrast the inconsiderate harshness of men with the patient humility of women. Encouraged by Moritz, who declared the book ''better than Goethe,'' Richter for the first time signed his work ''Jean Paul.'' He was well paid for it and had no further serious financial cares.

Before the *Lodge* was out of press Jean Paul had begun *Hesperus, or 45 Dog-post-days*, which magnified the merits of the earlier novel but also exaggerated its defects. Wanton eccentricity was given fuller play, formlessness seemed cultivated as an art. Digressions interrupt the narrative with slender excuse, or with none; there is, as with the English Sterne, an obtrusion of the author's personality; the style seems as wilfully crude as the mastery in word-building and word-painting is astonishing. On the other hand there is both greater variety and greater distinction in the characters, a more developed fabulation and a wonderful deepening and refinement of emotional description. *Werther* was not yet out of fashion and lovers of his ''Sorrows'' found in *Hesperus* a book after their hearts. It established the fame of Jean Paul for his generation. It brought women by swarms to his feet. They were not discouraged there. It was his platonic rule ''never to sacrifice one love to another,'' but to experiment with ''simultaneous love,'' ''*tutti* love,'' a ''general warmth'' of universal affection. Intellectually awakened women were attracted possibly as much by Richter's knowledge of their feelings as by the fascination of his personality. *Hesperus* lays bare many little wiles dear to feminine hearts, and contains some keenly sympathetic satire on German housewifery.

While still at work on *Hesperus* Jean Paul returned to his mother's house at Hof. " Richter's study and sitting-room offered about this time," says Doering, his first biographer, " a true and beautiful picture of his simple yet noble mind, which took in both high and low. While his mother bustled about the housework at fire or table he sat in a corner of the same room at a plain writing-desk with few or no books at hand, but only one or two drawers with excerpts and manuscripts. * * * Pigeons fluttered in and out of the chamber."

At Hof, Jean Paul continued to teach with originality and much success until 1796, when an invitation from Charlotte von Kalb to visit Weimar brought him new interests and connections. Meanwhile, having finished *Hesperus* in July, 1794, he began work immediately on the genial *Life of Quintus Fixlein, Based on Fifteen Little Boxes of Memoranda*, an idyl, like *Wuz*, of the schoolhouse and the parsonage, reflecting Richter's pedagogical interests and much of his personal experience. Its satire of philological pedantry has not yet lost pertinence or pungency. Quintus, ambitious of authorship, proposes to himself a catalogued interpretation of misprints in German books and other tasks hardly less laboriously futile. His creator treats him with unfailing good humor and " the consciousness of a kindred folly." Fixlein is the archetypal pedant. The very heart of humor is in the account of the commencement exercises at his school. His little childishnesses are delightfully set forth; so, too, is his awe of aristocracy. He always took off his hat before the windows of the manor house, even if he saw no one there. The crown of it all is The Wedding. The bridal pair's visit to the graves of by-gone loves is a gem of fantasy. But behind all the humor and satire must not be forgotten, in view of what was to follow, the undercurrent of courageous democratic protest which finds its keenest expression in the "Free Note" to Chapter Six. *Fixlein* appeared in 1796.

Richter's next story, the unfinished *Biographical Recreations under the Cranium of a Giantess*, sprang immediately from a visit to Bayreuth in 1794 and his first introduction to aristocracy. Its chief interest is in the enthusiastic welcome it extends to the French Revolution. Intrinsically more important is the *Flower, Fruit and Thorn Pieces* which crowded the other subject from his mind and tells with much idyllic charm of "the marriage, life, death and wedding of F. H. Siebenkäs, Advocate of the Poor" (1796–7).

In 1796, at the suggestion of the gifted, emancipated and ill-starred Charlotte von Kalb, Jean Paul visited Weimar, already a Mecca of literary pilgrimage and the centre of neo-classicism. There, those who, like Herder, were jealous of Goethe, and those who, like Frau von Stein, were estranged from him, received the new light with enthusiasm — others with some reserve. Goethe and Schiller, who were seeking to blend the classical with the German spirit, demurred to the vagaries of Jean Paul's unquestioned genius. His own account of his visit to "the rock-bound Schiller" and to Goethe's "palatial hall" are precious commonplaces of the histories of literature. There were sides of Goethe's universal genius to which Richter felt akin, but he was quite ready to listen to Herder's warning against his townsman's "unrouged" infidelity, which had become socially more objectionable since Goethe's union with Christiane Vulpius, and Jean Paul presently returned to Hof, carrying with him the heart of Charlotte von Kalb, an unprized and somewhat embarrassing possession. He wished no heroine; for he was no hero, as he remarked dryly, somewhat later, when Charlotte had become the first of many "beautiful souls" in confusion of spirit about their heart's desire.

In 1797 the death of Jean Paul's mother dissolved home bonds and he soon left Hof forever, though still for a time maintaining diligent correspondence with the "erotic academy" as well as with new and more aristocratic "daughters of the Storm and Stress." The writings of this period are unimportant, some of them unworthy. Jean Paul was for a time in Leipzig and in Dresden. In October, 1798, he was again in Weimar, which, in the sunshine of Herder's praise, seemed at first his "Canaan," though he soon felt himself out of tune with Duchess Amalia's literary court. To this time belongs a curious *Conjectural Biography*, a pretty idyl of an ideal courtship and marriage as his fancy now painted it for himself. Presently he was moved to essay the realization of this ideal and was for a time betrothed to Karoline von Feuchtersleben, her aristocratic connections being partially reconciled to the *mésalliance* by Richter's appointment as Legationsrat. He begins already to look forward, a little ruefully, to the time when his heart shall be "an extinct marriage-crater," and after a visit to Berlin, where he basked in the smiles of Queen Luise, he was again betrothed, this time to the less intellectually gifted, but as devoted and better dowered Karoline Mayer, whom he married in 1801. He was then in his thirty-eighth year.

Richter's marriage is cardinal in his career. Some imaginative work he was still to do, but the dominant interests were hereafter to be in education and in political action. In his own picturesque language, hitherto his quest had been for the golden fleece of womanhood, hereafter it was to be for a crusade of men. The change had been already foreshadowed in 1799 by his stirring paper *On Charlotte Corday* (published in 1801).

Titan, which Jean Paul regarded as his "principal work and most complete creation," had been in his mind since 1792. It was begun in 1797 and finished, soon after his betrothal, in 1800. In this novel the thought of God and immortality is offered as a solution of all problems of nature and society. *Titan* is human will in contest with the divine harmony. The maturing Richter has come to see that idealism in thought and feeling must be balanced by realism in action if the thinker is to bear his part in the work of the world. The novel naturally falls far short of realizing its vast design. Once more the parts are more than the whole. Some descriptive passages are very remarkable and the minor characters, notably Roquairol, the Mephistophelean Lovelace, are more interesting than the hero or the heroine. The unfinished *Wild Oats* of 1804, follows a somewhat similar design. The story of Walt and Vult, twin brothers, Love and Knowledge, offers a study in contrasts between the dreamy and the practical, with much self-revelation of the antinomy in the author's own nature. There is something here to recall his early satires, much more to suggest Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*.

While *Wild Oats* was in the making, Richter with his young wife and presently their first daughter, Emma, was making a sort of triumphal progress among the court towns of Germany. He received about this time from Prince Dalberg a pension, afterward continued by the King of Bavaria. In 1804 the family settled in Bayreuth, which was to remain Richter's not always happy home till his death in 1825.

The move to Bayreuth was marked by the appearance of *Introduction to Esthetics*, a book that, even in remaining a fragment, shows the parting of the ways. Under its frolicsome exuberance there is keen analysis, a fine nobility of temper, and abundant subtle observation. The philosophy was Herder's, and a glowing eulogy of him closes the study. Its most original and perhaps most valuable section contains a shrewd discrimination of the varieties of humor, and ends with a brilliant praise of wit, as though in a recapitulating review of Richter's own most distinctive contribution to German literature.

The first fruit to ripen at the Bayreuth home was *Levana*, finished in October, 1806, just as Napoleon was crushing the power of Prussia at Jena. Though disconnected and unsystematic *Levana* has been for three generations a true yeast of pedagogical ideas, especially in regard to the education of women and their social position in Germany. Against the ignorance of the then existing conditions Jean Paul raised eloquent and indignant protest. "Your teachers, your companions, even your parents," he exclaims, "trample and crush the little flowers you shelter and cherish. * * * Your hands are used more than your heads. They let you play, but only with your fans. Nothing is pardoned you, least of all a heart." What *Levana* says of the use and abuse of philology and about the study of history as a preparation for political action is no less significant. Goethe, who had been reticent of praise in regard to the novels, found in *Levana* "the boldest virtues without the least excess."

From the education of children for life Richter turned naturally to the education of his fellow Germans for citizenship. It was a time of national crisis. Already in 1805 he had published a *Little Book of Freedom*, in protest against the censorship of books. Now to his countrymen, oppressed by Napoleon, he addressed at intervals from 1808 to 1810, a *Peace Sermon*, *Twilight Thoughts for Germany* and *After Twilight.* Then, as the fires of Moscow heralded a new day, came *Butterflies of the Dawn;* and when the War of Liberation was over and the German rulers had proved false to their promises, these "Butterflies" were expanded and transformed, in 1817, into *Political Fast-Sermons for Germany's Martyr-Week*, in which Richter denounced the princes for their faithlessness as boldly as he had done the sycophants of Bonaparte.

Most noteworthy of the minor writings of this period is *Dr. Katzenberger's Journey to the Baths*, published in 1809. The effect of this rollicking satire on affectation and estheticism was to arouse a more manly spirit in the nation and so it helped to prepare for the way of liberation. The patriotic youth of Germany now began to speak and think of Richter as Jean Paul the Unique. In the years that follow Waterloo every little journey that Richter took was made the occasion of public receptions and festivities. Meanwhile life in the Bayreuth home grew somewhat strained. Both partners might well have heeded *Levana's* counsel that " Men should show more love, women more common sense."

Of Richter's last decade two books only call for notice here, *Truth about Jean Paul's Life*, a fragment of autobiography written in 1819, and *The Comet*, a novel, also unfinished, published at intervals from 1820 to 1822. Hitherto, said Richter of *The Comet*, he had paid too great deference to rule, " like a child born curled and forthwith stretched on a swathing cushion." Now, in his maturity, he will, he says, let himself go; and a wild tale he makes of it, exuberant in fancy, rich in comedy, unbridled in humor. The Autobiography extends only to Schwarzenbach and his confirmation, but of all his writings it has perhaps the greatest charm.

Richter's last years were clouded by disease, mental and physical, and by the death of his son Max. A few weeks before his own death he arranged for an edition of his complete works, for which he was to receive 35,000 thaler ($26,000). For this he sought a special privilege, copyright being then very imperfect in Germany, on the ground that in all his works not one line could be found to offend religion or virtue.

He died on November 14, 1825. On the evening of November 17 was the funeral. Civil and military, state and city officials took part in it. On the bier was borne the unfinished manuscript of *Selina*, an essay on immortality. Sixty students with lighted torches escorted the procession. Other students bore, displayed, *Levana* and the *Introduction to Esthetics.*

Sixteen years after Richter's death the King of Bavaria erected a statue to him in Bayreuth. But his most enduring monument had already long been raised in the funeral oration by Ludwig Börne at Frankfurt. "A Star has set," said the orator, " and the eye of this century will close before it rises again, for bright genius moves in wide orbits and our distant descendants will be first again to bid glad welcome to that from which their fathers have taken sad leave. * * * We shall mourn for him whom we have lost and for those others who have not lost him, for he has not lived for all. Yet a time will come when he shall be born for all and all will lament him. But he will stand patient on the threshold of the twentieth century and wait smiling till his creeping people shall come to join him."

QUINTUS FIXLEIN'S WEDDING*

From *The Life of Quintus Fixlein* (1796)

By Jean Paul

TRANSLATED BY T. CARLYLE

AT the sound of the morning prayer-bell, the bridegroom — for the din of preparation was disturbing his quiet orison — went out into the churchyard, which (as in many other places) together with the church, lay round his mansion like a court. Here, on the moist green, over whose closed flowers the churchyard wall was still spreading broad shadows, did his spirit cool itself from the warm dreams of Earth: here, where the white flat grave-stone of his Teacher lay before him like the fallen-in door of the Janus-temple of life, or like the windward side of the narrow house, turned toward the tempests of the world: here, where the little shrunk metallic door on the grated cross of his father uttered to him the inscriptions of death, and the year when his parent departed, and all the admonitions and mementos, graven on the lead — there, I say, his mood grew softer and more solemn; and he now lifted up by heart his morning prayer, which usually he read, and entreated God to bless him in his office, and to spare his mother's life, and to look with favor and acceptance on the purpose of today. Then, over the graves, he walked into his fenceless little angular flower-garden; and here, composed and confident in the divine keeping, he pressed the stalks of his tulips deeper into the mellow earth.

But on returning to the house, he was met on all hands by the bell-ringing and the Janizary-music of wedding-gladness; the marriage-guests had all thrown off their nightcaps, and were drinking diligently; there was a clattering, a cooking, a frizzling; tea-services, coffee-services, and warm beer-services, were advancing in succession; and plates full of bride-cakes were going round like potter's frames or cistern-wheels. The Schoolmaster, with three young lads, was heard rehearsing from his own house an *Arioso*, with which, so soon as they were perfect, he purposed to surprise his clerical superior. But now rushed all the arms of the foaming joy-streams into one, when the sky-queen besprinkled with blossoms the bride, descended upon Earth in her timid joy, full of quivering, humble love; when the bells began; when the procession-column set forth with the whole village round and before it; when the organ, the congregation, the officiating priest, and the sparrows on the trees of the church-window, struck louder and louder their rolling peals on the drum of the jubilee-festival. * * * The heart of the singing bridegroom was like to leap from its place for joy "that on his bridal-day it was all so respectable and grand." Not till the marriage benediction could he pray a little.

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* Permission Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.

Still worse and louder grew the business during dinner, when pastry-work and march-pane-devices were brought forward, when glasses, and slain fishes (laid under the napkins to frighten the guests) went round, and when the guests rose and themselves went round, and, at length, danced round: for they had instrumental music from the city there.

One minute handed over to the other the sugar-bowl and bottle-case of joy: the guests heard and saw less and less, and the villagers began to see and hear more and more, and toward night they penetrated like a wedge into the open door — nay, two youths ventured even in the middle of the parsonage-court to mount a plank over a beam and commence seesawing. Out of doors, the gleaming vapor of the departed sun was encircling the earth, the evening-star was glittering over parsonage and churchyard; no one heeded it.

However, about nine o'clock, when the marriage-guests had well nigh forgotten the marriage-pair, and were drinking or dancing along for their own behoof; when poor mortals, in this sunshine of Fate, like fishes in the sunshine of the sky, were leaping up from their wet cold element; and when the bridegroom under the star of happiness and love, casting like a comet its long train of radiance over all his heaven, had in secret pressed to his joy-filled breast his bride and his mother — then did he lock a slice of wedding-bread privily into a press, in the old superstitious belief that this residue secured continuance of bread for the whole marriage. As he returned, with greater love for the sole partner of his life, she herself met him with his mother, to deliver him in private the bridal-nightgown and bridal-shirt, as is the ancient usage. Many a countenance grows pale in violent emotions, even of joy. Thiennette's wax-face was bleaching still whiter under the sunbeams of Happiness. O, never fall, thou lily of Heaven, and may four springs instead of four seasons open and shut thy flower-bells to the sun! All the arms of his soul, as he floated on the sea of joy, were quivering to clasp the soft warm heart of his beloved, to encircle it gently and fast, and draw it to his own.

He led her from the crowded dancing-room into the cool evening. Why does the evening, does the night, put warmer love in our hearts? Is it the nightly pressure of helplessness or is it the exalting separation from the turmoil of life — that veiling of the world, in which for the soul nothing more remains but souls; — is it therefore that the letters in which the loved name stands written on our spirit appear, like phosphorus-writing, by night, *in fire*, while by day in their *cloudy* traces they but smoke?

He walked with his bride into the Castle garden: she hastened quickly through the Castle, and past its servants' hall, where the fair flowers of her young life had been crushed broad and dry, under a long dreary pressure; and her soul expanded and breathed in the free open garden, on whose flowery soil destiny had cast forth the first seeds of the blossoms which today were gladdening her existence. Still Eden! Green flower-chequered *chiaroscuro!* The moon is sleeping under ground like a dead one; but beyond

BRIDAL PROCESSION

From the Painting by Ludwig Richter

PERMISSION VELHAGEN & KLASING, BIELEFELD AND LEIPZIG

the garden the sun's red evening-clouds have fallen down like rose-leaves; and the evening-star, the brideman of the sun, hovers, like a glancing butterfly, above the rosy red, and, modest as a bride, deprives no single starlet of its light.

The wandering pair arrived at the old gardener's hut, now standing locked and dumb, with dark windows in the light garden, like a fragment of the Past surviving in the Present. Bared twigs of trees were folding, with clammy half-formed leaves, over the thick intertwisted tangles of the bushes. The Spring was standing, like a conqueror, with Winter at his feet. In the blue pond, now bloodless, a dusky evening sky lay hollowed out, and the gushing waters were moistening the flower-beds. The silver sparks of stars were rising on the altar of the East, and, falling down, were extinguished in the red sea of the West.

The wind whirred, like a night-bird, louder through the trees, and gave tones to the acacia-grove; and the tones called to the pair who had first become happy within it: "Enter, new mortal pair, and think of what is past, and of my withering and your own; be holy as Eternity, and weep not only for joy, but for gratitude also!" And the wet-eyed bridegroom led his wet-eyed bride under the blossoms, and laid his soul, like a flower, on her heart, and said: "Best Thiennette, I am unspeakably happy, and would say much, but cannot! Ah, thou Dearest, we will live like angels, like children together! Surely I will do all that is good to thee; two years ago I had nothing, no, nothing; ah, it is through thee, best love, that I am happy. I call thee Thou, now, thou dear good soul!" She drew him closer to her, and said, though without kissing him: "Call me Thou always, Dearest!"

And as they stept forth again from the sacred grove into the magic-dusky garden, he took off his hat; first, that he might internally thank God, and, secondly, because he wished to look into this fairest evening sky.

They reached the blazing, rustling, marriage-house, but their softened hearts sought stillness; and a foreign touch, as in the blossoming vine, would have disturbed the flower-nuptials of their souls. They turned rather, and winded up into the churchyard to preserve their mood. Majestic on the groves and mountains stood the Night before man's heart, and made that also great. Over the *white* steeple-obelisk the sky rested *bluer*, and *darker;* and, behind it, wavered the withered summit of the May-pole with faded flag. The son noticed his father's grave, on which the wind was opening and shutting, with harsh noise, the little door of the metal cross, to let the year of his death be read on the brass plate within. As an overpowering sadness seized his heart with violent streams of tears, and drove him to the sunk hillock, he led his bride to the grave, and said: "Here sleeps he, my good father; in his thirty-second year he was carried hither to his long rest. O thou good, dear father, couldst thou today but see the happiness of thy son, like my mother! But thy eyes are empty, and thy breast is full of ashes, and thou seest us not." He was silent. The bride wept aloud; she saw the moldering coffins of her parents open, and the two dead arise and look round for their daughter, who had stayed so long behind them, forsaken on the earth. She fell upon his heart, and faltered: "O beloved, I have neither father nor mother. Do not forsake me!"

O thou who hast still a father and a mother, thank God for it, on the day when thy soul is full of joyful tears and needs a bosom whereon to shed them. * * *

And with this embracing at a father's grave, let this day of joy be holily concluded.

ROME*

From *Titan* (1800)

By Jean Paul

TRANSLATED BY C. T. BROOKS

HALF an hour after the earthquake the heavens swathed themselves in seas, and dashed them down in masses and in torrents. The naked *Campagna* and heath were covered with the mantle of rain. Gaspard was silent, the heavens black; the great thought stood alone in Albano that he was hastening on toward the bloody scaffold and the throne-scaffolding of humanity, the heart of a cold, dead heathen-world, the eternal Rome; and when he heard, on the *Ponte Molle*, that he was now going across the Tiber, then was it to him as if the past had risen from the dead, as if the stream of time ran backward and bore him with it; under the streams of heaven he heard the seven old mountain-streams, rushing and roaring, which once came down from Rome's hills, and, with seven arms, uphove the world from its foundations. At length the constellation of the mountain city of God, that stood so broad before him, opened out into distant nights; cities, with scattered lights, lay up and down, and the bells (which to his ear were alarm-bells) sounded out the fourth hour;† when the carriage rolled through the triumphal gate of the city, the *Porta del Popolo,* then the moon rent her black heavens, and poured down out of the cleft clouds the splendor of a whole sky. There stood the Egyptian Obelisk of the gateway, high as the clouds, in the night, and three streets ran gleaming apart. "So," (said Albano to himself, as they passed through the long *Corso* to the tenth ward) "thou art veritably in the camp of the God of war—here is where he grasped the hilt of the monstrous war-sword, and with the point made the three wounds in three quarters of the world!" Rain and splendor gushed through the vast, broad streets; occasionally he passed suddenly along by gardens, and into broad city-deserts and market-places of the past. The rolling of the carriages amidst the rush and roar of the rain resembled the thunder whose days were once holy to this heroic city, like the thundering heaven to the thundering earth; muffled-up forms, with little lights, stole through the dark streets; often there stood a long palace with colonnades in the light of the moon, often a solitary gray column, often a single high fir tree, or a statue behind cypresses. Once, when there was neither rain nor moonshine, the carriage went round the corner of a large house, on whose roof a tall, blooming virgin, with an uplooking child on her arm, herself directed a little hand-light, now toward a white statue, now toward the child, and so, alternately, illuminated each. This friendly group made its way to the very centre of his soul, now so highly exalted, and brought with it, to him, many a recollection; particularly was a Roman child to him a wholly new and mighty idea.

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* Permission Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.

† Ten o'clock.

They alighted at last at the Prince *di Lauria's*— Gaspard's father-in-law and old friend. * * * Albano, dissatisfied with all, kept his inspiration sacrificing to the unearthly gods of the past round about him, after the old fashion, namely, with silence. Well might he and could he have discussed, but otherwise, namely in odes, with the whole man, with streams which mount and grow upward. He looked even more and more longingly out of the window at the moon in the pure rain-blue, and at single columns of the Forum; out of doors there gleamed for him the greatest world. At last he rose up, indignant and impatient, and stole down into the glimmering glory, and stepped before the Forum; but the moonlit night, that decoration-painter, which works with irregular strokes, made almost the very stage of the scene irrecognizable to him.

What a dreary, broad plain, loftily encompassed with ruins, gardens and temples, covered with prostrate capitals of columns, and with single, upright pillars, and with trees and a dumb wilderness! The heaped-up ashes out of the emptied urn of Time! And the potsherds of a great world flung around! He passed by three temple columns,* which the earth had drawn down into itself even to the breast, and along through the broad triumphal arch of Septimius Severus; on the right, stood a chain of columns without their temple; on the left, attached to a Christian church, the colonnade of an ancient heathen temple, deep sunken into the sediment of time; at last the triumphal arch of Titus, and before it, in the middle of the woody wilderness, a fountain gushing into a granite basin.

He went up to this fountain, in order to survey the plain out of which the thunder months of the earth once arose; but he went along as over a burnt-out sun, hung round with dark, dead earths. "O Man, O the dreams of Man!" something within him unceasingly cried. He stood on the granite margin, turning toward the Coliseum, whose mountain ridges of wall stood high in the moonlight, with the deep gaps which had been hewn in them by the scythe of Time. Sharply stood the rent and ragged arches of Nero's golden house close by, like murderous cutlasses. The Palatine Hill lay full of green gardens, and, in crumbling temple-roofs, the blooming death-garland of ivy was gnawing, and living ranunculi still glowed around sunken capitals. The fountain murmured babblingly and forever, and the stars gazed steadfastly down, with transitory rays, upon the still battlefield over which the winter of time had passed without bringing after it a spring; the fiery soul of the world had flown up, and the cold, crumbling giant lay around; torn asunder were the gigantic spokes of the main-wheel, which once the very stream of ages drove. And in addition to all this, the moon shed down her light like eating silver-water upon the naked columns, and would fain have dissolved the Coliseum and the temples and all into their own shadows!

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* Of Jupiter Tonans.

Then Albano stretched out his arm into the air, as if he were giving an embrace and flowing away as in the arms of a stream, and exclaimed, "O ye mighty shades, ye, who once strove and lived here, ye are looking down from Heaven, but scornfully, not sadly, for your great fatherland has died and gone after you! Ah, had I, on the insignificant earth, full of old eternity which you have made great, only done one action worthy of you! Then were it sweet to me and legitimate to open my heart by a wound, and to mix earthly blood with the hallowed soil, and, out of the world of graves, to hasten away to you, eternal and immortal ones! But I am not worthy of it!"

At this moment there came suddenly along up the *Via Sacra* a tall man, deeply enveloped in a mantle, who drew near the fountain without looking round, threw down his hat, and held a coal-black, curly, almost perpendicular, hindhead under the stream of water. But hardly had he, turning upward, caught a glimpse of the profile of Albano, absorbed in his fancies, when he started up, all dripping, stared at the count, fell into an amazement, threw his arms high into the air, and said, "*Amico!*" Albano looked at him. The stranger said, "Albano!" "My Dian!" cried Albano; they clasped each other passionately and wept for love.

Dian could not comprehend it at all; he said in Italian: "But it surely cannot be you; you look old." He thought he was speaking German all the time, till he heard Albano answer in Italian. Both gave and received only questions. Albano found the architect merely browner, but there was the lightning of the eyes and every faculty in its old glory. With three words he related to him the journey, and who the company were. "How does Rome strike you?" asked Dian, pleasantly. "As life does," replied Albano, very seriously, "it makes me too soft and too hard." "I recognize here absolutely nothing at all," he continued; "do those columns belong to the magnificent temple of Peace?" "No," said Dian, "to the temple of Concord; of the other there stands yonder nothing but the vault." "Where is Saturn's temple?" asked Albano. "Buried in St. Adrian's church," said Dian, and added hastily: "Close by stand the ten columns of Antonine's temple; over beyond there the baths of Titus; behind us the Palatine hill; and so on. Now tell me —!"

They walked up and down the Forum, between the arches of Titus and Severus. Albano (being near the teacher who, in the days of childhood, had so often conducted him hitherward) was yet full of the stream which had swept over the world, and the all-covering water sunk but slowly. He went on and said: "Today, when he beheld the Obelisk, the soft, tender brightness of the moon had seemed to him eminently unbecoming for the giant city; he would rather have seen a sun blazing on its broad banner; but now the moon was the proper funeral-torch beside the dead Alexander, who, at a touch, collapses into a handful of dust." "The artist does not get far with feelings of this kind," said Dian, "he must look upon everlasting beauties on the right hand and on the left." "Where," Albano went on asking, "is the old lake of Curtius — the Rostrum — the pila Horatia — the temple of Vesta — of Venus, and of all those solitary columns?" "And where is the marble Forum itself?" said Dian; "it lies thirty span deep below our feet." "Where is the great, free people, the senate of kings, the voice of the orators, the procession to the Capitol? Buried under the mountain of potsherds! O Dian, how can a man who loses a father, a beloved, in Rome shed a single tear or look round him with consternation, when he comes out here before this battle-field of time and looks into the charnel-house of the nations? Dian, one would wish here an iron heart, for fate has an iron hand!"

Dian, who nowhere stayed more reluctantly than upon such tragic cliffs hanging over, as it were, into the sea of eternity, almost leaped off from them with a joke; like the

Greeks, he blended dances with tragedy! "Many a thing is preserved here, friend!" said he; "in Adrian's church yonder they will still show you the bones of the three men that walked in the fire." "That is just the frightful play of destiny," replied Albano, "to occupy the heights of the mighty ancients with monks shorn down into slaves."

"The stream of time drives new wheels," said Dian: "yonder lies Raphael twice buried.*" * * * And so they climbed silently and speedily over rubbish and torsos of columns, and neither gave heed to the mighty emotion of the other.

Rome, like the Creation, is an entire wonder, which gradually dismembers itself into new wonders, the Coliseum, the Pantheon, St. Peter's church, Raphael, etc.

With the passage through the church of St. Peter, the knight began the noble course through Immortality. The Princess let herself, by the tie of Art, be bound to the circle of the men. As Albano was more smitten with edifices than with any other work of man, so did he see from afar, with holy heart, the long mountain-chain of Art, which again bore upon itself hills, so did he stop before the plain, around which the enormous colonnades run like Corsos, bearing a people of statues. In the centre shoots up the Obelisk, and on its right and left an eternal fountain, and from the lofty steps the proud Church of the world, inwardly filled with churches, rearing upon itself a temple toward Heaven, looks down upon the earth. But how wonderfully, as they drew near, had its columns and its rocky wall mounted up and flown away from the vision!

He entered the magic church, which gave the world blessings, curses, kings and popes, with the consciousness, that, like the world-edifice, it was continually enlarging and receding more and more the longer one remained in it. They went up to two children of white marble who held an incense-muscle-shell of yellow marble; the children grew by nearness till they were giants. At length they stood at the main altar and its hundred perpetual lamps. What a place! Above them the heaven's arch of the dome, resting on four inner towers; around them an over-arched city of four streets in which stood churches. The temple became greatest by walking in it; and, when they passed round one column, there stood a new one before them, and holy giants gazed earnestly down.

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* The body in the Pantheon, the head in Saint Luke's church.

Here was the youth's large heart, after so long a time, filled. "In no art," said he to his father, "is the soul so mightily possessed with the sublime as in architecture; in every other the giant stands within and in the depths of the soul, but here he stands out of and close before it." Dian, to whom all images were more clear than abstract ideas, said he was perfectly right. Fraischdörfer replied, "The sublime also here lies only in the brain, for the whole church stands, after all, in something greater, namely, in Rome, and under the heavens; in the presence of which latter we certainly should not feel anything." He also complained that "the place for the sublime in his head was very much narrowed by the innumerable volutes and monuments which the temple shut up therein at the same time with itself." Gaspard, taking everything in a large sense, remarked, "When the sublime once really appears, it then, by its very nature, absorbs and annihilates all little circumstantial ornaments." He adduced as evidence the tower of the Minster,* and Nature itself, which is not made smaller by its grasses and villages.

Among so many connoisseurs of art, the Princess enjoyed in silence.

The ascent of the dome Gaspard recommended to defer to a dry and cloudless day, in order that they might behold the queen of the world, Rome, upon and from the proper throne; he therefore proposed, very zealously, the visiting of the Pantheon, because he was eager to let this follow immediately after the impression of Saint Peter's church. They went thither. How simply and grandly the hall opens! Eight yellow columns sustain its brow, and majestically as the head of the Homeric Jupiter its temple arches itself. It is the Rotunda or Pantheon. "O the pigmies," cried Albano, "who would fain give us new temples! Raise the old ones higher out of the rubbish, and then you have built enough!"* They stepped in. There rose round about them a holy, simple, free world-structure, with its heaven-arches soaring and striving upward, an Odeum of the tones of the Sphere-music, a world in the world! And overhead† the eye-socket of the light and of the sky gleamed down, and the distant rack of clouds seemed to touch the lofty arch over which it shot along! And round about them stood nothing but the temple-bearers, the columns! The temple of *all* gods endured and concealed the diminutive altars of the later ones.

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* Strassburg.

Gaspard questioned Albano about his impressions. He said he preferred the larger church of Saint Peter. The knight approved, and said that youth, like nations, always more easily found and better appreciated the sublime than the beautiful, and that the spirit of the young man ripened from strong to beautiful, as the body of the same ripens from the beautiful into the strong; however, he himself preferred the Pantheon. "How could the moderns," said the Counsellor of Arts, Fraischdörfer, "build anything, except some little Bernini-like turrets?" "That is why," said the offended Provincial Architect, Dian (who despised the Counsellor of Arts, because he never made a good figure except in the esthetic hall of judgment as critic, never in the exhibition-hall as painter), "we moderns are, without contradiction, stronger in criticism; though in practice we are, collectively and individually, blockheads." Bouverot remarked that the Corinthian columns might be higher. The Counsellor of Arts said that after all he knew nothing more like this fine hemisphere than a much smaller one, which he had found in Herculaneum molded in ashes, of the bosom of a fair fugitive.'' The knight laughed, and Albano turned away in disgust and went to the Princess.

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* The hall of the Pantheon seems too low, because a part of its steps is hidden by the rubbish.

† This opening in the roof is twenty-seven feet in diameter.

He asked her for her opinion about the two temples. ''Sophocles here, Shakespeare there; but I comprehend and appreciate Sophocles more easily,'' she replied, and looked with new eyes into his new countenance. For the supernatural illumination through the zenith of Heaven, not through a hazy horizon, transfigured, in her eyes, the beautiful and excited countenance of the youth; and she took for granted that the saintly halo of the dome must also exalt her form. When he answered her: ''Very good! But in Shakespeare, Sophocles also is contained, not, however, Shakespeare in Sophocles — and upon Peter's Church stands Angelo's Rotunda!'', just then the lofty cloud, all at once, as by the blow of a hand out of the ether, broke in two, and the ravished Sun, like the eye of a Venus floating through her ancient heavens — for she once stood even here — looked mildly in from the upper deep; then a holy radiance filled the temple, and burned on the porphyry of the pavement, and Albano looked around him in an ecstasy of wonder and delight, and said with low voice: ''How transfigured at this moment is everything in this sacred place! Raphael's spirit comes forth from his grave in this noontide hour, and everything which its reflection touches brightens into godlike splendor!'' The Princess looked upon him tenderly, and he lightly laid his hand upon hers, and said, as one vanquished, ''Sophocles!''

On the next moonlit evening, Gaspard bespoke torches, in order that the Coliseum, with its giant-circle, might the first time stand in fire before them. The knight would fain have gone around alone with his son, dimly through the dim work, like two spirits of the olden time, but the Princess forced herself upon him, from a too lively wish to share with the noble youth his great moments, and perhaps, in fact, her heart and his own. Women do not sufficiently comprehend that an idea, when it fills and elevates man's mind, shuts it, then, against love, and crowds out persons; whereas with woman all ideas easily become human beings.

They passed over the Forum, by the *Via Sacra*, to the Coliseum, whose lofty, cloven forehead looked down pale under the moonlight. They stood before the gray rock-walls, which reared themselves on four colonnades one above another, and the torchlight shot up into the arches of the arcades, gilding the green shrubbery high overhead, and deep in the earth had the noble monster already buried his feet. They stepped in and ascended the mountain, full of fragments of rock, from one seat of the spectators to another. Gaspard did not venture to the sixth or highest, where the men used to stand, but Albano and the Princess did. Then the youth gazed down over the cliffs, upon the round, green crater of the burnt-out volcano, which once swallowed nine thousand beasts at once, and which quenched itself with human blood. The lurid glare of the torches penetrated into the clefts and caverns, and among the foliage of the ivy and laurel, and among the great shadows of the moon, which, like departed spirits, hovered in caverns. Toward the south, where the streams of centuries and barbarians had stormed in, stood single columns and bare arcades. Temples and three palaces had the giant fed and lined with his limbs, and still, with all his wounds, he looked out livingly into the world.

"What a people!" said Albano. "Here curled the giant snake five times about Christianity. Like a smile of scorn lies the moonlight down below there upon the green arena, where once stood the Colossus of the Sun-god. The star of the north* glimmers low through the windows, and the Serpent and the Bear crouch. What a world has gone by!" The Princess answered that "twelve thousand prisoners built this theatre, and that a great many more had bled therein." "O! we too have building prisoners," said he, "but for fortifications; and blood, too, still flows, but with sweat! No, we have no present; the past, without it, must bring forth a future."

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* The Pole-star, as well as other northern constellations, stands lower in the south.

The Princess went to break a laurel-twig and pluck a blooming wall-flower. Albano sank away into musing: the autumnal wind of the past swept over the stubble. On this holy eminence he saw the constellations, Rome's green hills, the glimmering city, the Pyramid of Cestius; but all became Past, and on the twelve hills dwelt, as upon graves, the lofty old spirits, and looked sternly into the age, as if they were still its kings and judges.

"This to remember the place and time!" said the approaching Princess, handing him the laurel and the flower. "Thou mighty One! a Coliseum is thy flower-pot; to thee is nothing too great, and nothing too small!" said he, and threw the Princess into considerable confusion, till she observed that he meant not her, but nature. His whole being seemed newly and painfully moved, and, as it were, removed to a distance: he looked down after his father, and went to find him; he looked at him sharply, and spoke of nothing more this evening.

THE OPENING OF THE WILL

From the *Flegeljahre* (1804)

By Jean Paul

TRANSLATED BY FRANCES H. KING

SINCE Haslau had been a princely residence no one could remember any event — the birth of the heir apparent excepted — that had been awaited with such curiosity as the opening of the Van der Kabel will. Van der Kabel might have been called the Haslau Crœsus — and his life described as a pleasure-making mint, or a washing of gold sand under a golden rain, or in whatever other terms wit could devise. Now, seven distant living relatives of seven distant deceased relatives of Kabel were cherishing some hope of a legacy, because the Crœsus had sworn to remember them. These hopes, however, were very faint. No one was especially inclined to trust him, as he not only conducted himself on all occasions in a gruffly moral and unselfish manner — in regard to morality, to be sure, the seven relatives were still beginners — but likewise treated everything so derisively and possessed a heart so full of tricks and surprises that there was no dependence to be placed upon him. The eternal smile hovering around his temples and thick lips, and the mocking falsetto voice, impaired the good impression that might otherwise have been made by his nobly cut face and a pair of large hands, from which New Year's presents, benefit performances, and gratuities were continually falling. Wherefore the birds of passage proclaimed the man, this human mountain-ash in which they nested and of whose berries they ate, to be in reality a dangerous trap; and they seemed hardly able to see the visible berries for the invisible snares.

Between two attacks of apoplexy he made his will and deposited it with the magistrate. Though half dead when he gave over the certificate to the seven presumptive heirs he said in his old tone of voice that he did not wish this token of his decease to cause dejection to mature men whom he would much rather think of as laughing than as weeping heirs. And only one of them, the coldly ironical Police-Inspector Harprecht, answered the smilingly ironical Crœsus: "It was not in their power to determine the extent of their collective sympathy in such a loss."

At last the seven heirs appeared with their certificate at the city hall. These were the Consistorial Councilor Glanz, the Police Inspector, the Court-Agent Neupeter, the Attorney of the Royal Treasury Knol, the Bookseller Passvogel, the Preacher-at-Early-Service Flachs, and Herr Flitte from Alsace. They duly and properly requested of the magistrates the charter consigned to the latter by the late Kabel, and asked for the opening of the will. The chief executor of the will was the officiating Burgomaster in person, the under-executors were the Municipal-Councilors. Presently the charter and the will were fetched from the Council-chamber into the Burgomaster's office, they were passed around to all the Councilors and the heirs, in order that they might see the privy seal of the city upon them, and the registry of the consignment written by the town clerk upon the charter was read aloud to the seven heirs. Thereby it was made known to them that the charter had really been consigned to the magistrates by the late departed one and confided to them *scrinio rei publicæ*, likewise that he had been in his right mind on the day of the consignment. The seven seals which he himself had placed upon it were found to be intact. Then — after the Town-Clerk had again drawn up a short record of all this — the will was opened in God's name and read aloud by the officiating Burgomaster. It ran as follows:

"I, Van der Kabel, do draw up my will on this seventh day of May 179—, here in my house in Haslau, in Dog Street, without a great ado of words, although I have been both a German notary and a Dutch *dominé.* Notwithstandinging, I believe that I am still sufficiently familiar with the notary's art to be able to act as a regular testator and bequeather of property.

"Testators are supposed to commence by setting forth the motives which have caused them to make their will. These with me, as with most, are my approaching death, and the disposal of an inheritance which is desired by many. To talk about the funeral and such matters is too weak and silly. That which remains of me, however, may the eternal sun above us make use of for one of his verdant springs, not for a gloomy winter!

"The charitable bequests, about which notaries must always inquire, I shall attend to by setting aside for three thousand of the city's paupers an equal number of florins so that in the years to come, on the anniversary of my death, if the annual review of the troops does not happen to take place on the common that day, they can pitch their camp there and have a merry feast off the money, and afterward clothe themselves with the tent linen. To all the schoolmasters of our Principality also I bequeath to every man one august d'or, and I leave my pew in the Court church to the Jews of the city. My will being divided into clauses, this may be taken as the first.

"SECOND CLAUSE

It is the general custom for legacies and disinheritances to be counted among the most essential parts of the will. In accordance with this custom Consistorial Councillor Glanz, Attorney of the Royal Treasury Knol, Court-Agent Peter Neupeter, Police-Inspector Harprecht, the Preacher-at-Early-Service Flachs, the Court-bookseller Passvogel and Herr Flitte, for the time being receive nothing; not so much because no *Trebellianica* is due them as the most distant relatives, or because most of them have themselves enough to bequeath, as because I know out of their own mouths that they love my insignificant person better than my great wealth, which person I therefore leave them, little as can be got out of it."

Seven preternaturally long faces at this point started up like the Seven-sleepers. The Consistorial Councillor, a man still young but celebrated throughout all Germany for his oral and printed sermons, considered himself the one most insulted by such taunts. From the Alsatian Flitte there escaped an oath accompanied by a slight smack of the tongue. The chin of Flachs, the Preacher-at-Early-Service, grew downward into a regular beard.

The City Councillors could hear several softly ejaculated obituaries referring to the late Kabel under the name of scamp, fool, infidel, etc. But the officiating Burgomaster waved his hand, the Attorney of the Royal Treasury and the Bookseller again bent all the elastic steel springs of their faces as if setting a trap, and the Burgomaster continued to read, although with enforced seriousness.

"THIRD CLAUSE

I make an exception of the present house in Dog Street which, after this my third clause, shall, just as it stands, devolve upon and belong to that one of my seven above-named relatives, who first, before the other six rivals, can in one half hour's time (to be reckoned from the reading of the Clause) shed one or two tears over me, his departed uncle, in the presence of an estimable magistrate who shall record the same. If, however, all eyes remain dry, then the house likewise shall fall to the exclusive heir whom I am about to name."

Here the Burgomaster closed the will, remarked that the condition was certainly unusual but not illegal, and the court must adjudge the house to the first one who wept. With which he placed his watch, which pointed to half-past eleven, on the office-table, and sat himself quietly down in order in his capacity of executor to observe, together with the whole court, who should first shed the desired tear over the testator. It cannot fairly be assumed that, as long as the earth has stood, a more woe-begone and muddled congress ever met upon it than this one composed of seven dry provinces assembled together, as it were, in order to weep. At first some precious minutes were spent merely in confused wondering and in smiling; the congress had been placed too suddenly in the situation of the dog who, when about to rush angrily at his enemy, heard the latter call out: Beg!—and who suddenly got up on his hind legs and begged, showing his teeth. From cursing they had been pulled up too quickly into weeping.

Every one realized that genuine emotion was not to be thought of; downpours do not come quite so much on the gallop; such sudden baptism of the eyes was out of the question; but in twenty-six minutes something might happen.

The merchant Neupeter asked if it were not an accursed business and a foolish joke on the part of a sensible man, and he refused to lend himself to it; but the thought that a house might swim into his purse on a tear caused him a peculiar irritation of the glands, which made him look like a sick lark to whom a clyster is being applied with an oiled pinhead—the house being the head.

The Attorney of the Royal Treasury Knol screwed up his face like a poor workman, whom an apprentice is shaving and scraping on a Saturday evening by the light of a shoemaker's candle; he was furiously angry at the misuse made of the title " Will " and quite near to shedding tears of rage.

The crafty Bookseller Passvogel at once quietly set about the matter in hand; he hastily went over in his mind all the touching things which he was publishing at his own expense or on commission, and from which he hoped to brew something; he looked the while like a dog that is slowly licking off the emetic which the Parisian veterinary, Demet, had smeared on his nose; it would evidently be some time before the desired effect would take place.

Flitte from Alsace danced around in the Burgomaster's office, looked laughingly at all the serious faces and swore he was not the richest among them, but not for all Strasburg and Alsace besides was he capable of weeping over such a joke.

At last the Police-Inspector looked very significantly at him and declared: In case Monsieur hoped by means of laughter to squeeze the desired drops out of the well-known glands and out of the Meibomian, the caruncle, and others, and thus thievishly to cover himself with this window-pane moisture, he wished to remind him that he could gain just as little by it as if he should blow his nose and try to profit by that, as in the latter case it was well known that more tears flowed from the eyes through the *ductus nasalis* than were shed in any church-pew during a funeral sermon. But the Alsatian assured him he was only laughing in fun and not with serious intentions.

The Inspector for his part tried to drive something appropriate into his eyes by holding them wide open and staring fixedly.

The Preacher-at-Early-Service Flachs looked like a Jew beggar riding a runaway horse. Meanwhile his heart, which was already overcast with the most promising sultry clouds caused by domestic and church-troubles, could have immediately drawn up the necessary water, as easily as the sun before bad weather, if only the floating-house navigating toward him had not always come between as a much too cheerful spectacle, and acted as a dam.

The Consistorial Councillor had learned to know his own nature from New Year's and funeral sermons, and was positive that he himself would be the first to be moved if only he started to make a moving address to others. When therefore he saw himself and the others hanging so long on the drying-line, he stood up and said with dignity: Every one who had read his printed works knew for a certainty that he carried a heart in his breast, which needed to repress such holy tokens as tears are — so as not thereby to deprive any fellowman of something — rather than laboriously to draw them to the surface with an ulterior motive. "This heart has already shed them, but in secret, for Kabel was my friend," he said, and looked around.

He noticed with pleasure that all were sitting there as dry as wooden corks; at this special moment crocodiles, stags, elephants, witches, ravens* could have wept more easily than the heirs, so disturbed and enraged were they by Glanz. Flachs was the only one who had a secret inspiration. He hastily summoned to his mind Kabel's charities and the mean clothes and gray hair of the women who formed his congregation at the early-service, Lazarus with his dogs, and his own long coffin, and also the beheading of various people, Werther's Sorrows, a small battlefield, and himself — how pitifully here in the days of his youth he was struggling and tormenting himself over the clause of the will — just three more jerks of the pump-handle and he would have his water and the house.

"O Kabel, my Kabel!" continued Glanz, almost weeping for joy at the prospect of the approaching tears of sorrow. "When once beside your loving heart covered with earth my heart too shall mol —"

"I believe, honored gentlemen," said Flachs mournfully, arising and looking around, his eyes brimming over, "I am weeping." After which he sat down again and let them flow more cheerfully; he had feathered his nest. Under the eyes of the other heirs he had snatched away the prize-house from Glanz, who now extremely regretted his exertions, since he had quite uselessly talked away half of his appetite. The emotion of Flachs was placed on record and the house in Dog Street was adjudged to him for good and all. The Burgomaster was heartily glad to see the poor devil get it. It was the first time in the principality of Haslau that the tears of a school-master and teacher-of-the-church had been metamorphosed, not like those of the Heliades into light amber, which incased an insect, but like those of the goddess Freya, into gold. Glanz congratulated Flachs, and gayly drew his attention to the fact that perhaps he, Glanz, had helped to move him. The rest drew aside, by their separation accentuating their position on the dry road from that of Flachs on the wet; all, however, remained intent upon the rest of the will.

Then the reading of it was continued.

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* The German texts read: *Reben*, vines. But the conjecture *Raben* as the correct reading may be permitted.—Ed.

WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT

SCHILLER AND THE PROCESS OF HIS INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

From the *Introduction to the Correspondence of Schiller and W. von Humboldt* (1830)

TRANSLATED BY FRANCES H. KING

SCHILLER'S poetic genius showed itself in his very first productions. In spite of all their defects in form, in spite of many things which to the mature artist seemed absolutely crude, *The Robbers* and *Fiesko* gave evidence of remarkable inherent power. His genius later betrayed itself in the longing for poetry, as for the native atmosphere of his spirit, which longing constantly breaks out in his varied philosophical and historical labors and is often hinted at in his letters to me. It finally revealed itself in virile power and refined purity in those dramas which will long remain the pride and the renown of the German stage.

This poetic genius, however, is most closely wedded, in all its height and depth, to thought; it manifests itself, in fact, in an intellectuality which by analysis would separate everything into its parts, and then by combination would unite all in one complete whole. In this lies Schiller's peculiar individuality. He demanded of poetry more profundity of thought and forced it to submit to a more rigid intellectual unity than it had ever had before. This he did in a two-fold manner—by binding it into a more strictly artistic form, and by treating every poem in such a way that its subject-matter readily broadened its individuality until it expressed a complete idea.

It is upon these peculiarities that the excellence which characterizes Schiller as a writer rests. It is because of them that, in order to bring out the greatest and best of which he was capable, he needed a certain amount of time before his completely developed individuality, to which his poetic genius was indissolubly united, could reach that point of clearness and definiteness of expression which he demanded of himself. * * *

On the other hand, it would probably be agreeable to the reader of this correspondence if I should attempt briefly to show how my opinion of Schiller's individuality was formed by intercourse with him, by reminiscences of his conversation, by the comparison of his productions in their successive sequence, and by a study of the development of his intellect.

What must necessarily have impressed every student of Schiller as most characteristic was the fact that thinking was the very substance of his life, in a higher and more significant sense than perhaps has ever been the case with any other person. His intellect was alive with spontaneous and almost tireless activity, which ceased only when the attacks of his physical infirmity became overpowering. Such activity seemed to him a recreation rather than an effort, and was manifested most conspicuously in conversation, for which Schiller appeared to have a natural aptitude.

He never sought for deep subjects of conversation, but seemed rather to leave the introduction of a subject to chance; but from each topic he led the discourse up to a general point of view, and after a short dialogue one found oneself in the very midst of a mentally stimulating discussion. He always treated the central idea as an end to be attained in common; he always seemed to need the help of the person with whom he was conversing, for, although the latter always felt that the idea was supplied by Schiller alone, Schiller never allowed him to remain inactive.

This was the chief difference between Schiller's and Herder's mode of conversing. Never, perhaps, has there been a man who talked with greater charm than Herder, if one happened to catch him in an agreeable mood — not a difficult matter when any kind of note was struck with

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WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT

which he was in harmony. All the extraordinary qualities of this justly admired man seemed to gain double power in conversation, for which they were so peculiarly adapted. The thought blossomed forth in expression with a grace and dignity which appeared to proceed from the subject alone, although really belonging only to the individual. Thus speech flowed on uninterruptedly with a limpidness which still left something remaining for one's own imagination, and yet with a *chiaroscuro* which did not prevent one from definitely grasping the thought. As soon as one subject was exhausted a new one was taken up. Nothing was gained by making objections which would only have served as a hindrance. One had listened, one could even talk oneself, but one felt the lack of an interchange of thought.

Schiller's speech was not really beautiful, but his mind constantly strove, with acumen and precision, to make new intellectual conquests; he held this effort under control, however, and soared above his subject in perfect liberty. Hence, with a light and delicate touch he utilized any side-issue which presented itself, and this was the reason why his conversation was peculiarly rich in words that are so evidently the inspiration of the moment; yet, in spite of such seeming freedom in the treatment of the subject, the final end was not lost sight of. Schiller always held with firmness the thread which was bound to lead thither, and, if the conversation was not interrupted by any mishap, he was not prone to bring it to a close until he had reached the goal.

And as Schiller in his conversation always aimed to add new ground to the domain of thought, so, in general, it may be said that his intellectual activity was always characterized by an intense spontaneity. His letters demonstrate these traits very perceptibly, and he knew absolutely no other method of working.

He gave himself up to mere reading late in the evening only, and during his frequently sleepless nights. His days were occupied with various labors or with specific preparatory studies in connection with them, his intellect being thus kept at high tension by work and research.

Mere studying undertaken with no immediate end in view save that of acquiring knowledge, and which has such a fascination for those who are familiar with it that they must be constantly on their guard lest it cause them to neglect other more definite duties — such studying, I say, he knew nothing about from experience, nor did he esteem it at its proper value. Knowledge seemed to him too material, and the forces of the intellect too noble, for him to see in this material anything more than mere stuff to be worked up. It was only because he placed more value upon the higher activity of the intellect, which creates independently out of its own depths, that he had so little sympathy with its efforts of a lower order. It is indeed remarkable from what a small stock of material and how, in spite of wanting the means by which such material is procured by others, Schiller obtained his comprehensive theory of life (*Weltanschauung*), which, when once grasped, fairly startles us by the intuitive truthfulness of genius; for one can give no other name to that which originates without outside aid.

Even in Germany he had traveled only in certain districts, while Switzerland, of which his *William Tell* contains such vivid descriptions, he had never seen. Any one who has ever stood by the Falls of the Rhine will involuntarily recall, at the sight, the beautiful strophe in *The Diver* in which this confusing tumult of waters, that so captivates the eye, is depicted; and yet no personal view of these rapids had served as the basis for Schiller's description.

But whatever Schiller did acquire from his own experience he grasped with a clearness which also brought distinctly before him what he learned from the description of others. Besides, he never neglected to prepare himself for every subject by exhaustive reading. Anything that might prove to be of use, even if discovered accidentally, fixed itself firmly in his memory; and his tirelessly-working imagination, which, with constant liveliness, elaborated now this now that part of the material collected from every source, filled out the deficiencies of such second-hand information.

In a manner quite similar he made the spirit of Greek poetry his own, although his knowledge of it was gained exclusively from translations. In this connection he spared himself no pains. He preferred translations which disclaimed any particular merit in themselves, and his highest consideration was for the literal classical paraphrases. * * * *The Cranes of Ibycus* and the *Festival of Victory* wear the colors of antiquity with all the purity and fidelity which could be expected from a modern poet, and they wear them in the most beautiful and most spirited manner. The poet, in these works, has quite absorbed the spirit of the ancient world; he moves about in it with freedom, and thus creates a new form of poetry which, in all its parts, breathes only such a spirit. The two poems, however, are in striking contrast with each other. *The Cranes of Ibycus* permitted a thoroughly epic development; what made the subject of intrinsic value to the poet was the idea which sprung from it of the power of artistic representation upon the human soul. This power of poetry, of an invisible force created purely by the intellect and vanishing away when brought into contact with reality, belonged essentially to the sphere of ideas which occupied Schiller so intensely.

As many as eight years before the time when this subject assumed the ballad form within his mind it had floated before his vision, as is evident in the lines which are taken from his poem *The Artists* —

> "Awed by the Furies' chorus dread
> Murder draws down upon its head
> The doom of death from their wild song."

This idea, moreover, permitted an exposition in complete harmony with the spirit of antiquity; the latter had all the requisites for bringing it into bold relief in all its purity and strength. Consequently, every particular in the whole narrative is borrowed immediately from the ancient world, especially the appearance and the song of Eumenides. The chorus as employed by Æschylus is so artistically interwoven with the modern poetic form, both in the matter of rhyme and the length of the metre, that no portion of its quiet grandeur is lost.

The Festival of Victory is of a lyric, of a contemplative nature. In this work the poet was able — indeed was compelled — to lend from his own store an element which did not lie within the sphere of ideas and the sentiments of antiquity; but everything else follows the spirit of the Homeric poem with as great purity as it does in the *Cranes of Ibycus.* The poem as a whole is clearly stamped with a higher, more distinct, spirituality than is usual with the ancient singers; and it is in this particular that it manifests its most conspicuous beauties.

The earlier poems of Schiller are also rich in particular traits borrowed from the poems of the ancients, and into them he has often introduced a higher significance than is found in the original. Let me refer in this connection to his description of death from *The Artists* — "The gentle bow of necessity" — which so beautifully recalls the *gentle darts* of Homer, where, however, the transfer of the adjective from *darts* to *bow* gives to the thought a more tender and a deeper significance.

Confidence in the intellectual power of man heightened to poetic form is expressed in the distichs entitled *Columbus,* which are among the most peculiar poetic productions that Schiller has given us. Belief in the invisible force inherent in man, in the opinion, which is sublime and deeply true, that there must be an inward mystic harmony between it and the force which orders and governs the entire universe (for all truth can only be a reflection of the eternal primal Truth), was a characteristic feature of Schiller's way of thinking. It harmonized also with the persistence with which he followed up every intellectual task until it was satisfactorily completed. We see the same thought expressed in the same kind of metaphor in the bold but beautiful expression which occurs in the letters from Raphael to Julius in the magazine, *The Thalia* —

THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN
With the statues of Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt

"When Columbus made the risky wager with an untraveled sea." * * *

Art and poetry were directly joined to what was most noble in man; they were represented to be the medium by means of which he first awakens to the consciousness of that nature, reaching out beyond the finite, which dwells within him. Both of them were thus placed upon the height from which they really originate. To safeguard them upon this height, to save them from being desecrated by every paltry and belittling view, to rescue them from every sentiment which did not spring from their purity, was really Schiller's aim, and appeared to him as his true life-mission determined for him by the original tendency of his nature.

His first and most urgent demands are, therefore, addressed to the poet himself, from whom he requires not merely genius and talent isolated, as it were, in their activity, but a mood which takes possession of the entire soul and is in harmony with the sublimity of his vocation; it must be not a mere momentary exaltation, but an integral part of character. "Before he undertakes to influence the best among his contemporaries he should make it his first and most important business to elevate his own self to the purest and noblest ideal of humanity." * * * To no one does Schiller apply this demand more rigorously than to himself.

Of him it can truthfully be said that matters which bordered upon the common or even upon the ordinary, never had the slightest hold upon him; that he transferred completely the high and noble views which filled his thoughts to his mode of feeling and his life; and that in his compositions he was ever, with uniform force, inspired with a striving for the ideal. This was true even of his minor productions.

To assign to poetry, among human endeavors, the lofty and serious place of which I have spoken above, to defend it from the petty point of view of those who, mistaking its dignity, and the pedantic attitude of those who, mistaking its peculiar character, regard it only as a trifling adornment and embellishment of life or else ask an immediate moral effect and teaching from it — this, as one cannot repeat too often, is deeply rooted in the German habit of thought and feeling. Schiller in his poetry gave utterance — in his own individual manner, however — to whatever his German nature had implanted in him, to the harmony which rang out to him from the depths of the language, the mysterious effect of which he so cleverly perceived and knew how to use so masterfully. * * *

The deeper and truer trend of the German resides in his highly developed sensibility which keeps him closer to the truths of nature, in his inclination to live in the world of ideas and of emotions dependent upon them, and, in fact, in everything which is connected therewith. * * *

A favorite idea which often engaged Schiller's attention was the need of educating the crude natural man — as he understood him — through art, before he could be left to attain culture through reason. Schiller has enlarged upon this theme on many occasions, both in prose and verse. His imagination dwelt by preference upon the beginnings of civilization in general, upon the transition from the nomadic life to the agricultural, upon the covenant established in naïve faith with pious Mother Earth, as he so beautifully expresses it.

Whatever mythology offered here as kindred material, he grasped with eagerness and firmness. Faithfully following the traces of fable, he made of Demeter, the chief personage in the group of agricultural deities, a figure as wonderful as it was appealing, by uniting in her breast human feelings with divine. It was long a cherished plan with Schiller to treat in epic form the earliest Attic civilization resulting from foreign immigration. *The Eleusinian Festival*, however, replaced this plan, which was never executed. * * *

The merely emotional, the fervid, the simply descriptive, in fact every variety of poetry derived directly from contemplation and feeling, are found in Schiller in countless single passages and in whole poems. * * * But the most remarkable evidence of the consummate genius of the poet is seen in *The Song of the Bell,* which, in changing metre, in descriptions full of vivacity where a few touches represent a whole picture, runs through the varied experiences in the life of man and of society; for it expresses the feelings which arise in each of them, and ever adapts the whole, symbolically, to the tones of the bell, the casting and completing of which the poem accompanies throughout in all its various stages. I know of no poem, in any language, which shows so wide a poetic world in so small a compass, that so runs through the scale of all that is deepest in human feelings, and, in the guise of a lyric, depicts life in its important events and epochs as if in an epic poem confined within natural limits. But the poetic clearness is enhanced by the fact that a subject which is portrayed as actually existing, corresponds with the shadowy visions of the imagination; and the two series thus formed run parallel with each other to the same end. * * *

Schiller was snatched from the world in the full maturity of his intellectual power, though he would undoubtedly have been able to perform an endless amount of additional work. His scope was so unlimited that he would never have been able to find a goal, and the constantly increasing activity of his mind would never have allowed him time for stopping. For long years ahead he would have been able to enjoy the happiness, the rapture, yes, the bliss of his occupation as a poet, as he so inimitably describes it in one of the letters in this collection, written about a plan for an idyl. His life ended indeed before the customary limit had been reached, yet, while it lasted, he worked exclusively and uninterruptedly in the realm of ideas and fancy.

Of no one else, perhaps, can it be said so truthfully that "he had thrown away the fear of that which was earthly and had escaped out of the narrow gloomy life into the realm of the ideal." And it may be observed, in closing, that he had lived surrounded only by the most exalted ideas and the most brilliant visions which it is possible for a mortal to appropriate and to create. One who thus departs from earth cannot be regarded as otherwise than happy.

THE EARLY ROMANTIC SCHOOL

By James Taft Hatfield, Ph.D.
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THE latter half of the eighteenth century has been styled the Age of Enlightenment, a convenient name for a period in which there was a noticeable attempt to face the obvious, external facts of life in a clear-eyed and courageous way. The centralizing of political power in the hands of Louis XIV. of France and his successors had been accompanied by a " standardizing " of human affairs which favored practical efficiency and the easier running of the social machine, but which was far from helpful to the self-expression of distinctly-marked individuals.

The French became sovereign arbiters of taste and form, but their canons of art were far from nature and the free impulses of mankind. The particular development of this spirit of clarity in Berlin, the centre of German influence, lay in the tendency to challenge all historic continuity, and to seek uniformity based upon practical needs.

Rousseau's revolutionary protests against inequality and artificiality — particularly his startling treatise *On the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men* (1754) — and his fervent preaching of the everlasting superiority of the heart to the head, constitute the most important factor in a great revolt against regulated social institutions, which led, at length, to the " Storm and Stress " movement in Germany, that boisterous forerunner of Romanticism, yet so unlike it that even Schlegel compared its most typical representatives to the biblical herd of swine which stampeded — into oblivion. Herder, proclaiming the vital connection between the soul of a whole nation and its literature, and preaching a religion of the feelings rather than a gospel of " enlightenment;" young Goethe, by his daring and untrammeled Shakespearian play, *Goetz von Berlichingen*, and by his open defiance, announced in *Werther*, of the authority of all artistic rules and standards; and Bürger, asserting the right of the common man to be the only arbiter of literary values, were, each in his own way, upsetting the control of an artificial " classicism." Immanuel Kant, whose deep and dynamic thinking led to a revolution comparable to a cosmic upheaval in the geological world, compelled his generation to discover a vast new moral system utterly disconcerting to the shallow complacency of those who had no sense of higher values than " practical efficiency."

When, in 1794, Goethe and Schiller, now matured and fully seasoned by a deep-going classical and philosophical discipline, joined their splendid forces and devoted their highest powers to the building up of a comprehensive esthetic philosophy, the era was fully come for new constructive efforts on German soil. Incalculably potent was the ferment liberated by Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (1795–1796) — its attacking the problem of life from the emotional and esthetic side; its defense of the " call " of the individual as outweighing the whole social code; its assertion that genius outranks general laws, and imagination every-day rules; its abundance of " poetic " figures taking their part in the romance.

The birth of the Romantic School can be pretty definitely set at about 1796; its cradle was in the quaint university town of Jena, at that time the home of Schiller and his literary-esthetic enterprises, and only a few miles away from Goethe in Weimar. Five names embody about all that was most significant in the earlier movement: Fichte, the brothers Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, Tieck, and Novalis.

The discussion of Fichte belonging to another division of this work, it is enough to recall here that he was already professor of philosophy at Jena when the Schlegel brothers made their home there in 1796, and that it was while there that he published his *Doctrine of Science*, the charter of independence of the Romantic School, announcing the annihilation of physical values, proclaiming the soul as above things perceived, the inner spirit as that alembic in which all objects are produced. With almost insolent freshness Fichte asserted a re-valuation of all values: what had been "enlightenment" was now to be called shallowness; "ancient crudities" were to be reverenced as deeper perceptions of truth; "fine literature" was to be accounted a frivolous thing. Fichte made a stirring appeal to young men, especially, as being alone able to perceive the meaning of science and poetry.

To take part in the contagion of these ideas, there settled in Jena in 1796 the two phenomenal Schlegel brothers. It is not easy or necessary to separate, at this period, the activities of their agile minds. From their early days, as sons in a most respectable Lutheran parsonage in North Germany, both had shown enormous hunger for cultural information, both had been voracious in exploiting the great libraries within their reach. It is generally asserted that they were lacking in essential virility and stamina; as to the brilliancy of their acquisitions, their fineness of appreciation, and their wit, there can be no question whatever. Madame de Staël called them "the fathers of modern criticism," a title which has not been challenged by the best authorities of our time.

Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829), the younger of the two, is counted to be the keener and more original mind. He had a restless and unsettled youth, mostly spent in studies; after various disappointments, he determined to make classical antiquity his life-work; while mastering the body of ancient literature, he was assimilating, with much the same sort of eagerness, the philosophical systems of Kant and Fichte. His first notable publication was an esthetic-philosophic essay, in the ample style of Schiller's later discourses, *Concerning the Study of Greek Poetry.*

He found in the Greeks of the age of Sophocles the ideal of a fully developed humanity, and exhibited throughout the discussion a remarkable mastery of the whole field of classical literature. Just at this time he removed to Jena to join his older brother, Wilhelm, who was connected with Schiller's monthly *The Hours* and his annual *Almanac of the Muses.* By a strange condition of things Friedrich was actively engaged at the moment in writing polemic reviews for the organs of Reichardt, one of Schiller's most annoying rivals in literary journalism; these reviews became at once noticeable for their depth and vigorous originality, particularly that one which gave a new and vital characterization of Lessing. In 1797 he moved to Berlin, where he gathered a group about him, including Tieck, and in this way established the external and visible body of the Romantic School, which the brilliant intellectual atmosphere of the Berlin salons, with their wealth of gifted and cultured women, did much to promote. In 1799 both he and Tieck joined the Romantic circle at Jena.

In Berlin he published in 1798 the first volume of the *Athenæum*, that journal which in a unique way represents the pure Romantic ideal at its actual fountain-head. It survived for three years, the last volume appearing in 1800. Its aim was to " collect all rays of human culture into one focus," and, more particularly, to confute the claim of the party of " enlightenment " that the earlier ages of human development were poor and unworthy of respect on the part of the closing eighteenth century. A very large part of the journal was written by the two brothers, Friedrich furnishing the most aggressive contributions, more notably being responsible for the epigrammatic *Fragments*, which became, in their detached brevity and irresponsibility, a very favorite model for the form of Romantic doctrine. " I can talk daggers," he had said when younger, and he wrote the greater part of these, though some were contributed by Wilhelm Schlegel, by his admirable wife

Caroline, by Schleiermacher, and Novalis. The root of this form lies in French thinking and expression — especially the short deliverances of Chamfort, the epigrammatist of the French Revolution. These Orphic-apocalyptic sentences are a sort of foundation for a new Romantic bible. They are absolutely disconnected, they show a mixture and interpenetration of different spheres of thought and observation, with an unexpected deference to the appraisals of classic antiquity. Their range is unlimited: philosophy and psychology, mathematics and esthetics, philosophy and natural science, sociology and society, literature and the theatre are all largely represented in their scope.

Friedrich Schlegel's epigrammatic wit is the direct precursor of Heine's clever conceits in prose: one is instantly reminded of him by such *Athenæum*-fragments as " Kant, the Copernicus of Philosophy; " " Plato's philosophy is a worthy preface to the religion of the future; " " So-called ' happy marriages ' are related to love, as a correct poem to an improvised song; " " In genuine prose all words should be printed in italics; " " Catholicism is naïve Christianity; Protestantism is sentimental." The sheer whimsicality of phrase seems to be at times its own excuse for being, as in an explanation of certain elegiac poems as " the sensation of misery in the contemplation of the silliness of the relations of banality to craziness; " but there are many sentences which go deep below the surface — none better remembered, perhaps, than the dictum, " The French Revolution, Fichte's *Doctrine of Science*, and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* are the greatest symptoms of our age."

In the *Athenæum* both brothers give splendid testimony to their astonishing and epoch-making gift in transferring classical and Romance metrical forms into elegant, idiomatic German; they give affectionate attention to the insinuating beauty of elegiac verse, and secure charming effects in some of the most alien Greek forms, not to mention *terza rima, ottava rima,* the Spanish gloss, and not a few very notable sonnets.

The literary criticisms of the *Athenæum* are characteristically free and aggressive, particularly in the frequent sneers at the flat " homely " poetry of sandy North Germany. At the end of the second volume, the " faked " *Literary Announcements* are as daring as any attempts of American newspaper humor. When the sum of the contents and tendency of the journal is drawn, it is a strange mixture of discriminating philosophy, devoted Christianity, Greek sensuousness, and pornographic mysticism. There is a never-ending esthetic coquetry with the flesh, with a serious defense of some very Greek practices indeed. All of this is thoroughly typical of the spirit of the Romantic school, and it is by no means surprising that Friedrich's first book, the novel *Lucinda* (1799), should stand as the supreme unsavory classic in this field. That excellent divine, Schleiermacher, exalted this document of the Rights of the Flesh as " a pæan of Love, in all its completeness," but it is a feeble, tiresome performance, absolutely without structure, quite deserving the saucy epigram on which it was pilloried by the wit of the time:

Pedantry once of Fancy begged the dole
Of one brief kiss; she pointed him to Shame.
He, impotent and wanton, then Shame's favors stole.
Into the world at length a dead babe came —
" *Lucinda* " was its name.

The preaching of " religion," " womanliness," and the " holy fire of divine enjoyment " makes an unedifying *mélange:* " The holiest thing in any human being is his own mind, his own power, his own will; " " You do all according to your own mind, and refuse to be swayed by what is usual and proper." Schleiermacher admired in it that " highest wisdom and profoundest religion " which lead people to " yield to the rhythm of fellowship and friendship, and to disturb no harmony of love." In more prosaic diction, the upshot of its teaching was the surrender to momentary feelings, quite divorced from Laws or Things. The only morality is " full Humanity; " " Nature alone is worthy of honor, and sound health alone is worthy of love;" "Let the discourse of love," counsels Julius, "be bold and free, not more chastened than a Roman elegy"—which is certainly not very much—and the skirmishes of inclination are, in fact, set forth with an almost antique simplicity. Society is to be developed only by "wit," which is seriously put into comparison with God Almighty. As to practical ethics, one is told that the most perfect life is but a pure vegetation; the right to indolence is that which really makes the discrimination between choice and common beings, and is the determining principle of nobility. "The divine art of being indolent" and "the blissful bosom of half-conscious self-forgetfulness" naturally lead to the thesis that the empty, restless exertion of men in general is nothing but Gothic perversity, and "boots naught but *ennui* to ourselves and others." Man is by nature "a serious beast; one must labor to counteract this shameful tendency." Schleiermacher ventured, it is true, to raise the question as to whether the hero ought not to have some trace of the chivalrous about him, or ought not to do something effective in the outer world—and posterity has fully supported this inquiry.

Friedrich's next most important move was to Paris (1802), where he gave lectures on philosophy, and attempted another journal. Here he began his enthusiastic studies of the Sanskrit language and literature, which proved to have an important influence on the development of modern philology. This is eminently true of his work *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians* (1808). In 1804 he removed to Cologne, where he entered with great eagerness into the work of re-discovering the medieval Lower Rhenish School of religious art and Gothic architecture. In 1808 he, with his wife Dorothea (the daughter of Moses Mendelssohn, who years before this time had left her home and family to become his partner for life), entered the Roman Catholic church, the interests of which engaged much of his energies for the remainder of his life. He lived most of

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A HERMIT WATERING HORSES

the time in Vienna, partly engaged in the literary service of the Austrian government, partly in lecturing on history and literature. He died in 1829 in Dresden, whither he had gone to deliver a course of lectures.

Friedrich Schlegel's philosophy of life was based upon the theory of supremacy of the artist, the potency of poetry, with its incidental corollaries of disregard for the Kantian ideal of Duty, and aversion to all Puritanism and Protestantism. "There is no great world but that of artists," he declared in the *Athenæum;* "artists form a higher caste; they should separate themselves, even in their way of living, from other people." Poetry and philosophy formed in his thought an inseparable unit, forever joined, "though seldom together — like Castor and Pollux." His interest is in "Humanity," that is to say, a superior type of the species, with a corresponding contempt for "commonness," especially for the common man as a mere machine of "duty." On performances he set no great store: "Those countenances are most interesting to me in which Nature seems to have indicated a great design without taking time to carry it out."

August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767–1845), more simply known as "Wilhelm," was the more balanced, dignified, and serene nature, and possessed in a far higher degree than Friedrich the art of steering his course smoothly through life. Of very great significance in his training were his university years at Göttingen, and his acquaintance there with the poet Bürger, that early apostle of revolt from a formal literature, whose own life had become more and more discredited and was destined to go out in wretchedness and ignominy; the latter's fecundating activities had never been allowed full scope, but something of his spirit of adventure into new literary fields was doubtless caught by the younger man. Bürger's attempts at naturalizing the sonnet, for instance, are interesting in view of the fact that Wilhelm Schlegel became the actual creator of this literary form among the Germans. Schlegel's own pursuits as a student were prevailingly in the field of Hellenism, in which his acquisitions were astounding; his influence was especially potent in giving a philological character to much of the work of the Romanticists. In Göttingen he became acquainted with one of the most gifted women which Germany has ever produced, Caroline, the daughter of the Göttingen professor Michaelis, at the time a young widow in the home of her father, and destined to become not only his wife, but the Muse of much of his most important work. This office she performed until the time of their unfortunate separation.

After finishing his university studies, Wilhelm was for a while private tutor in a wealthy family at Amsterdam, where conditions of living were most agreeable, but where a suitable stimulus to the inborn life of his mind was lacking. He accordingly gave up this position and returned, with little but hopes, to Germany. Then came a call which was both congenial and honorable. Schiller's attention had been drawn, years before, to a review of his own profound philosophical poem, *The Artists,* by an unknown young man, whom he at once sought to secure as a regular contributor to his literary journal, *The New Thalia.* Nothing came of this, chiefly because of Schlegel's intimate relations to Bürger at the time. Schiller had published, not long before, his annihilatory review of Bürger's poems, which did so much to put that poet out of serious consideration for the remainder of his days. In the meantime Schiller had addressed himself to his crowning enterprise, the establishing of a literary journal which should be the final dictator of taste and literary criticism throughout the German-speaking world. In 1794 the plan for *The Hours* was realized under favorable auspices, and in the same year occurred the death of Bürger. In 1796 Schiller invited Wilhelm to become one of the regular staff of *The Hours,* and this invitation Schlegel accepted, finding in it the opportunity to marry Caroline, with whom he settled in Jena in July of that year. His first contribution to *The Hours* was a masterful and extended treatise on *Dante*, which was accompanied by translations which were clearly the most distinguished in that field which the German language had ever been able to offer. Schlegel also furnished elaborated poems, somewhat in Schiller's grand style, for the latter's *Almanac of the Muses.* During the years of his residence at Jena (which continued until 1801) Schlegel, with the incalculable assistance of his wife, published the first eight volumes of those renderings of Shakespeare's plays into German which doubtless stand at the very summit of the art of transferring a poet to an alien region, and which have, in actual fact, served to make the Bard of Avon as truly a fellow-citizen of the Germans as of the Britons. Wilhelm's brother Friedrich had remained but a year with him in Jena, before his removal to Berlin and his establishment of the *Athenæum.* Although separated from his brother, Wilhelm's part in the conduct of the journal was almost as important as Friedrich's, and, in effect, they conducted the whole significant enterprise out of their own resources. The opening essay, *The Languages*, is Wilhelm's, and properly, for at this time he was by far the better versed in philological and literary matters. His cultural acquisitions, his tremendous spoils of reading, were greater, and his judgment more trustworthy. In all his work in the *Athenæum* he presents a seasoned, many-sided sense of all poetical, phonetic and musical values: rhythm, color, tone, the lightest breath and aroma of an elusive work of art. One feels that Wilhelm overhauls the whole business of criticism, and clears the field for coming literary ideals. Especially telling is his demolition of Klopstock's violent "Northernism," to which he opposes a far wider philosophy of grammar and style. The universality of poetry, as contrasted with a narrow " German " clumsiness, is blandly defended, and a joyous abandon is urged as something better than the meticulous anxiety of chauvinistic partisanism. In all his many criticisms of literature there are charm, wit, and elegance, an individuality and freedom in the reviewer, who, if less penetrating than his brother, displays a far more genial breadth and humanity, and more secure composure. His translations, more masterly than those of Friedrich, carry out Herder's demand for complete absorption and re-creation.

In 1801 Schlegel went to Berlin, where for three successive winters he lectured on art and literature. His subsequent translations of Calderon's plays (1803–1809) and of Romance lyrics served to naturalize a large treasure of southern poetry upon German soil. In 1804, after having separated from his wife, he became attached to the household of Madame de Staël, and traversed Europe with her. It is through this association that she was enabled to write her brilliant work, *On Germany*. In 1808 he delivered a series of lectures on dramatic art and literature in Vienna, which enjoyed enormous popularity, and are still reckoned the crowning achievement of his career; perhaps the most significant of these is his discourse on Shakespeare. In the first volume of the *Athenæum*, Shakespeare's universality had already been regarded as "the central point of romantic art." As Romanticist, it was Schlegel's office to portray the independent development of the modern English stage, and to defend Shakespeare against the familiar accusations of barbaric crudity and formlessness. In surveying the field, it was likewise incumbent upon him to demonstrate in what respects the classic drama differed from the independently developed modern play, and his still useful generalization regards antique art as limited, clear, simple, and perfected — as typified by a work of sculpture; whereas romantic art delights in mingling its subjects — as a painting, which embraces many objects and looks out into the widest vistas. Apart from the clarity and smoothness of these Vienna discourses, their lasting merit lies in their searching observation of the import of dramatic works from their inner soul, and in a most discriminating sense of the relation of all their parts to an organic whole.

In 1818 Schlegel accepted a professorship at the University of Bonn, in which place he exercised an incalculable influence upon one of the rising stars of German literature, young Heinrich Heine, who derived from him (if we may judge from his own testimony at the time; Heine's later mood is a very different matter) an inspiration amounting to captivation. The brilliant young student discovered here a stimulating leader whose wit, finish, and elegance responded in full measure to the hitherto unsatisfied cravings of his own nature. Although Heine had become a very altered person at the time of writing his *Romantic School* (1836), this book throws a scintillating illumination upon certain sides of Schlegel's temperament, and offers a vivid impression of his living personality.

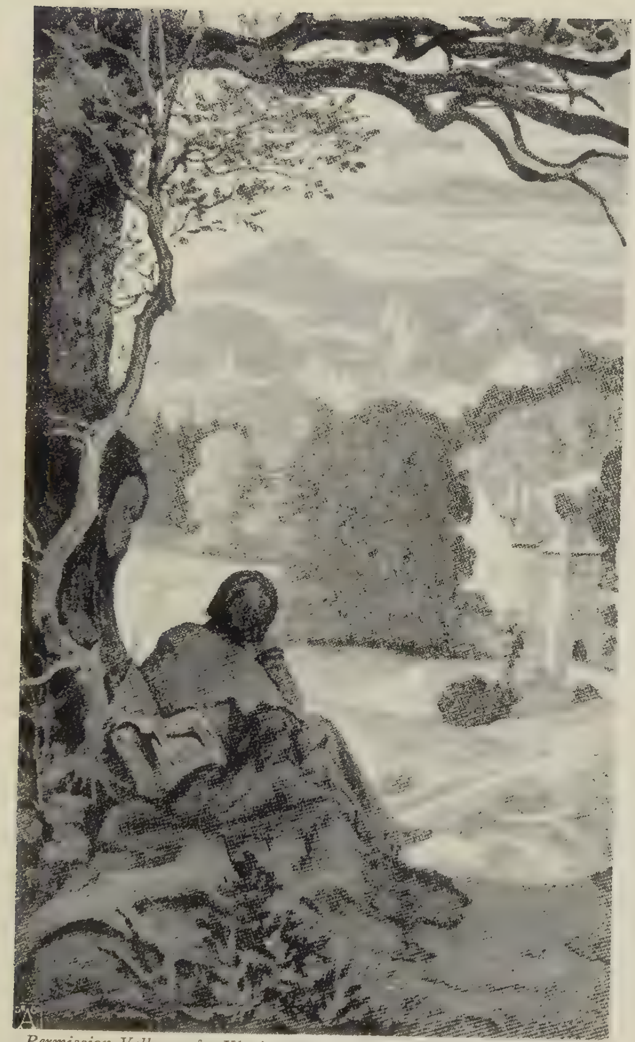
In these last decades of his life Schlegel turned, as had his younger brother, to the inviting field of Sanskrit literature and philology, and extracted large and important treasures which may still be reckoned among mankind's valued resources. When all discount has been made on the side of a lack of specific gravity in Wilhelm Schlegel's character, it is only just to assert that throughout his long and prolific life he wrought with incalculable effect upon the civilization of modern Europe as a humanizer of the first importance.

Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853) is reckoned by many students of the Romantic period to be the best and most lasting precipitate which the entire movement has to show. For full sixty years a most prolific writer, and occupied in the main with purely literary production, it is not strange that he came to be regarded as the poetic mouthpiece of the school.

His birth was in a middle-class family of Berlin. A full university training at Halle, Göttingen and Erlangen was accorded him, during which he cannot be said to have distinguished himself by any triumph in the field of formal studies, but in the course of which he assimilated at first hand the chief modern languages of culture, without any professional guidance. At an early stage in his growth he discovered and fed full upon Shakespeare. As a university student he also fell in love with the homely lore of German folk-poetry. In 1794 he came back to Berlin, and turned to rather banal hack-writing for the publisher Nicolai, chief of all exponents of rationalism. Significant was his early rehabilitation of popular folk-tales and chapbooks, as in *The Wonderful Love-Story of Beautiful Magelone and Count Peter of Provence* (1797). The stuff was that of one of the prose chivalry-stories of the middle ages, full of marvels, seeking the remote among strange hazards by land and sea. The tone of Tieck's narrative is childlike and naïve, with rainbow-glows of the bliss of romantic love, glimpses of the poetry and symbolism of Catholic tradition, and a somewhat sugary admixture of the spirit of the *Minnelied*, with plenty of refined and delicate sensuousness. With the postulate that song is the true language of life, the story is sprinkled with lyrics at every turn. The whole adventure is into the realm of dreams and vague sensations.

Tieck must have been liberally baptized with Spree-water, for the instantaneous, corrosive Berlin wit was a large part of his endowment. His cool irony associated him more closely to the Schlegels than to Novalis, with his life-and-death consecrations. His absurd play-within-a-play, *Puss in Boots* (1797), is delicious in its bizarre ragout of satirical extravaganzas, where the naïve and the ironic lie side by side, and where the pompous seriousness of certain complacent standards is neatly excoriated.

Such publications as the two mentioned were hailed with rejoicing by the Schlegels, who at once adopted Tieck as a natural ally. Even more after their own hearts was the long novel, *Franz Sternbald's Wanderings* (1798), a vibrant confession, somewhat influenced by *Wilhelm Meister*, of the Religion of Art (or the Art of Religion): "Devout worship is the highest and purest joy in Art, a joy of which our natures are capable only in their purest and most



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A WANDERER LOOKS INTO A LANDSCAPE

exalted hours." Sternbald, a pupil of Albrecht Dürer, makes a roving journey to the Low Countries, the Rhine, and Italy, in order to deepen his artistic nature. The psychology of the novel is by no means always true to the spirit of the sixteenth century; in fact a good part of the story reflects aristocratic French chateau-life in the eighteenth century. The intensities of romantic friendship give a sustained thrill, and the style is rhythmic, though the action is continually interrupted by episodes, lyrics, and discourses. In the unworldliness, the delicacy of sensibility, and the somewhat vague outlines of the story one may be reminded, at times, of *The Marble Faun.* Its defense of German Art, as compared with that of the Italian Renaissance, is its chief message.

This novel has been dwelt upon because of its direct influence upon German painting and religion. A new verb, "*sternbaldisieren,*" was coined to parody a new movement in German art toward the medieval, religious spirit. It is this book which Heine had in mind when he ridiculed Tieck's "silly plunge into medieval naïveté." Overbeck and Cornelius in Rome, with their pre-Raphaelite, old-German and catholicizing tendencies, became the leaders of a productive school. Goethe scourged it for its "mystic-religious" aspirations, and demanded a more vigorous, cheerful and progressive outlook for German painting.

Having already formed a personal acquaintance with Friedrich Schlegel in Berlin, Tieck moved to Jena in 1799, came into very close relations with Fichte, the Schlegels, and Novalis, and continued to produce works in the spirit of the group, notably the tragedy *Life and Death of Saint Genoveva* (1800). His most splendid literary feat at this period, however, was the translation of *Don Quixote* (1799–1801), a triumph over just those subtle difficulties which are well-nigh insurmountable, a rendering which went far beyond any mere literalness of text, and reproduced the very tone and aura of its original.

In 1803 he published a graceful little volume of typical

Minnelieder, renewed from the middle high-German period. The note of the book (in which Runge's copperplate outlines are perhaps as significant as the poems) is spiritualized sex-love: the utterance of its fragrance and delicacy, its unique place in the universe as a pathway to the Divine — a point of view to which the modern mind is prone to take some exceptions, considering a religion of erotics hardly firm enough ground to support an entire philosophy of living. All the motives of the old court-lyric are well represented — the torments and rewards of love, the charm of spring, the refinements of courtly breeding — and the sophisticated metrical forms are handled with great virtuosity. Schiller, it is true, compared them to the chatter of sparrows, and Goethe also paid his compliments to the "sing-song of the Minnesingers," but it was this same little book which first gave young Jakob Grimm the wish to become acquainted with these poets in their original form.

That eminently "Romantic" play, *Emperor Octavian* (1804), derived from a familiar medieval chap-book, lyric in tone and loose in form, is a pure epitome of the movement, and the high-water mark of Tieck's apostleship and service. Here Tieck shows his intimate sense of the poetry of inanimate nature; ironic mockery surrenders completely to religious devotion; the piece is bathed in —

> The light that never was on sea or land,
> The consecration and the poet's dream.

It is in the prologue to this play that personified Romance declares her descent from Faith, her father, and Love, her mother, and introduces the action by the command:

> "Moonshine-lighted magic night
> Holding every sense in thrall;
> World, which wondrous tales recall,
> Rise, in ancient splendors bright!"

During a year's residence in Italy Tieck applied himself chiefly to reading old-German manuscripts, in the Library

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A CHAPEL IN THE FOREST

of the Vatican, and wavered upon the edge of a decision to devote himself to Germanic philology. The loss to science is not serious, for Tieck hardly possessed the grasp and security which could have made him a peer of the great pioneers in this field. From the time of his leaving for Italy, Tieck's importance for the development of Romanticism becomes comparatively negligible.

After a roving existence of years, during which he lived in Vienna, Munich, Prague and London, he made a settled home in Dresden. Here he had an enviable place in the very considerable literary and artistic group, and led an existence of almost suspiciously " reasonable " well-being, from a Romantic view-point. The " dramatic evenings " at his home, in which he read plays aloud before a brilliant gathering, were a feature of social life. For seventeen years he had an influential position as " dramaturg " of the Royal Theatre, it being his duty to pass on plays to be performed and to decide upon suitable actors for the parts.

During his long residence in Dresden Tieck produced a very large number of short stories (*Novellen*) which had a decided vogue, though they differ widely from his earlier writings in dealing with real, contemporary life.

It is pleasant to record that the evening of Tieck's long life was made secure from anxieties by a call to Berlin from Friedrich Wilhelm IV., the " Romantic king." His last eleven years were spent there in quiet and peace, disturbed only by having to give dramatic readings before a self-sufficient court circle which was imperfectly equipped for appreciating the merits of Tieck's performances.

The early Romantic movement found its purest expression in the person and writings of Friedrich von Hardenberg, better known under his assumed literary name Novalis (1772–1801). Both his father, Baron von Hardenberg (chief director of the Saxon salt-works), and his mother belonged to the Moravians, that devoted group of mystical pietists whose sincere consecration to the things of the spirit has achieved a deathless place in the annals of the religious history of the eighteenth century, and, more particularly, determined the beginnings and the essential character of the world-wide Methodist movement. His gentle life presents very little of dramatic incident: he was a reserved, somewhat unsocial boy, greatly devoted to study and to the reading of poetry. He was given a most thorough education, and, while completing his university career, became acquainted with Friedrich Schlegel, and remained his most intimate friend. He also came to know Fichte, and eagerly absorbed his *Doctrine of Science.* A little later he came into close relations with Wilhelm Schlegel and Tieck in Jena. He experienced a seraphic love for a delicate girl of thirteen, whose passing away at the age of fifteen served to transport the youth's interests almost exclusively to the invisible world: "Life is a sickness of the spirit, a passionate Doing." His chief conversation lay in solitude, in seeking for a mystic inner solution of the secrets of external nature. He loved to discourse on these unseen realms, and to create an ideal connection between them all. The testimony of his friend Tieck, who in company with Friedrich Schlegel edited his works in a spirit of almost religious piety, runs: "The common life environed him like some tale of fiction, and that realm which most men conceive as something far and incomprehensible was the very Home of his Soul." He was not quite twenty-nine years old at the time of his peaceful death, which plunged the circle of his Romantic friends into deepest grief.

The envelope of his spiritual nature was so tenuous that he seemed to respond to all the subtler influences of the universe; a sensitive chord attuned to poetic values, he appeared to exercise an almost mediumistic refraction and revelation of matters which lie only in the realm of the transcendental —

"Weaving about the commonplace of things
The golden haze of morning's blushing glow."

In reading Novalis, it is hardly possible to discriminate between discourse and dreaming; his passion was for remote, never-experienced things —

> "Ah, lonely stands, and merged in woe,
> Who loves the past with fervent glow!"

His homesickness for the invisible world became an almost sensuous yearning for the joys of death.

In the first volume of the *Athenæum* (1798) a place of honor was given to his group of apothegms, *Pollen* (rather an unromantic translation for "*Blüthenstaub*"); these were largely supplemented by materials found after his death, and republished as *Fragments*. In the last volume of the same journal (1800) appeared his *Hymns to Night.* Practically all of his other published works are posthumous: his unfinished novel, *Henry of Ofterdingen;* a set of religious hymns; the beginnings of a "physical novel," *The Novices at Saïs.*

Novalis's aphoristic "seed-thoughts" reveal Fichte's transcendental idealistic philosophy as the fine-spun web of all his observations on life. The external world is but a shadow; the universe is in us; there, or nowhere, is infinity, with all its systems, past or future; the world is but a precipitate of human nature.

The Novices at Saïs, a mystical contemplation of nature reminding us of the discourses of Jakob Böhme, has some suggestion of the symbolistic lore of parts of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister,* and proves a most racking riddle to the uninitiated. The penetration into the meaning of the Veiled Image of Nature is attempted from the point of view that all is symbolic: only poetic, intuitive souls may enter in; the merely physical investigator is but searching through a charnel-house. Nature, the countenance of Divinity, reveals herself to the childlike spirit; to such she will, at her own good pleasure, disclose herself spontaneously, though gradually. This seems to be the inner meaning of the episodic tale, *Hyacinth and Rose-Blossom.* The rhythmic prose *Hymns to Night* exhale a delicate melancholy, moving in a vague haze, and yet breathing a peace which comes from a knowledge of the deeper meanings of things, divined rather than experienced. Their stealing melody haunts the soul, however dazed the mind may be with their vagueness, and their exaltation of death above life. In his *Spiritual Poems* we feel a simple, passionate intensity of adoration, a yearning sympathy for the hopeless and the heavy-laden; in their ardent assurance of love, peace, and rest, they are surely to be reckoned among the most intimate documents in the whole archives of the "varieties of religious experience."

The unfinished novel *Henry of Ofterdingen* reaches a depth of obscurity which is saved from absurdity only by the genuinely fervent glow of a soul on the quest for its mystic ideals: "The blue flower it is that I yearn to look upon!" No farcical romance of the nursery shows more truly the mingled stuff that dreams are made on, yet the intimation that the dream is not all a dream, that the spirit of an older day is symbolically struggling for some expression in words, gave it in its day a serious importance at which our own age can merely marvel. It brings no historical conviction; it is altogether free from such conventional limits as Time and Space. Stripped of its dreamy diction, there is even a tropical residue of sensuousness, to which the English language is prone to give a plainer name. It develops into a fantastic *mélange* which no American mind can possibly reckon with; what its effect would be upon a person relegated to reading it in close confinement, it would not be safe to assert, but it is quite certain that "this way madness lies."

To generalize about the Romantic movement, may seem about as practical as to attempt to make a trigonometrical survey of the Kingdom of Dreams. No epoch in all literary history is so hopelessly entangled in the meshes of subtle philosophical speculation, derived from the most complex sources. To deal with the facts of classic art, which is concerned with seeking a clearly-defined perfection, is a simple matter compared with the unbounded and undefined concepts of a school which waged war upon "the deadliness of ascertained facts" and immersed itself in vague intimations of glories that were to be. Its most authorized exponent declared it to be "the delineation of sentimental matter in fantastic form." A more elaborated authoritative definition is given in the first volume of the *Athenæum:*

"Romantic poetry is a progressive universal-poetry. Its aim is not merely to reunite all the dispersed classes of poetry, and to place poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetoric; it aims and ought to aim to mingle and combine poetry and prose, genius and criticism, artistic and natural poetry; to make poetry lively and social, to make life and society poetic; to poetize wit, to saturate all the forms of art with worthy materials of culture and enliven them by the sallies of humor. It embraces everything that is poetic, from the greatest and most inclusive system of art, to the sigh, the kiss, that the poetic child utters in artless song. Other classes of poetry are complete, and may now be exhaustively dissected; romantic poetry is still in process of becoming—in fact this is its chief characteristic, that it forever can merely become, but never be completed. It can never be exhausted by any theory, and only an intuitive criticism could dare to attempt to characterize its ideals. It alone is endless, as it alone is free, and asserts as its first law that the whim of the poet tolerates no law above itself. Romantic poetry is the only sort which is more than a class, and, as it were, the art of poetry itself."

We may in part account for Romanticism by recalling that it was the product of an age which was no longer in sympathy with its own tasks, an age of political miseries and restrained powers, which turned away from its own surroundings and sought to be free from all contact with them, striving to benumb its sensations by an auto-intoxication of dreams.

Romanticism is built upon the imposing corner-stone of the unique importance of the Individual: "To become God, to be man, to develop one's own being, these are expressions for the same thing." As personality is supreme, it is natural that there should follow a contempt for the mediocrity of current majorities, standards and opinions. It abhorred universal abstractions, as opposed to the truth and meaning of individual phenomena. It stoutly believed in an inexpugnable right to Illusions, and held clarity and earnestness to be foes of human happiness. "The poem gained great applause, because it had so strange, so well-nigh unintelligible a sound. It was like music itself, and for that very reason attracted so irresistibly. Although the hearers were awake, they were entertained *as though in a dream.*"

Hence a purely lyric attitude toward life, which was apprehended only on transcendent, musical valuations. Poetry was to be the heart and centre of actual living; modern life seemed full of "prose and pettiness" as compared with the Middle Ages; it was the doctrine of this Mary in the family of Bethany to leave to the Martha of dull externalists the care of many things, while she "chose the better part" in contemplative lingering at the vision of what was essentially higher. A palpitant imagination outranks "cold intelligence;" sensation, divorced from all its bearings or functions, is its own excuse for being. Of responsibility, hardly a misty trace; realities are playthings and to be treated allegorically.

The step was not a long one to the thesis that "disorder and confusion are the pledge of true efficiency"—such being one of the "seed-thoughts" of Novalis. In mixing all species, Romanticism amounts to unchartered freedom, "*die gesunde, kräftige Ungezogenheit.*" It is no wonder that so many of its literary works remain unfinished fragments, and that many of its exponents led unregulated lives.

"Get you irony, and form yourself to urbanity" is the counsel of Friedrich Schlegel. The unbridgeable chasm between Ideal and Life could not be spanned, and the baffled idealist met this hopelessness with the shrug of irony. The every-day enthusiasm of the common life invited only a sneer, often, it is true, associated with flashing wit.

Among its more pleasing manifestations, Romanticism shows a remarkable group of gifted, capable women, possibly because this philosophy of intuition corresponds to the higher intimations of woman's soul. Other obvious fruits of the movement were the revival of the poetry and dignity of the Middle Ages, both in art and life — that colorful, form-loving musical era which the Age of Enlightenment had so crassly despised. That this yearning for the beautiful background led to reaction in politics and religion is natural enough; more edifying are the rich fruits which scholarship recovered when Romanticism had directed it into the domains of German antiquity and philology, and the wealth of popular song. In addition to these, we must reckon the spoils which these adventurers brought back from their quest into the faery lands of Poetry in southern climes.

When all is said, and in spite of Romanticism's weak and unmanly quitting of the field of duty, in spite of certain tendencies to ignore and supersede the adamant foundations of morality upon which the "humanities" as well as society rest, one cannot quite help hoping that somehow good may be the final hint of it all. Like Mary Stuart, it is, at least, somewhat better than its worst repute, as formulated by its enemies. Estimates change; even the excellent Wordsworth was held by the English reviewers to be fantastic and vague in his *Ode to Duty*. We should not forget that the most shocking pronouncements of the Romanticists were uttered half-ironically, to say the least. After its excursion into the fantastic jungle of Romanticism, the world has found it restful and restorative, to be sure, to return to the limited perfection of the serene and approved classics; yet perchance it *is* the last word of all philosophy that the astounding circumambient Universe is almost entirely unperceived by our senses and reasoning powers.

Let us confess, and without apology, that the country which claims a Hawthorne, a Poe, and a youthful Longfellow, can never surrender unconditionally its hold upon the "True Romance:"

"Through wantonness if men profess
They weary of Thy parts,
E'en let them die at blasphemy
And perish with their arts;
But we that love, but we that prove
Thine excellence august,
While we adore discover more
Thee perfect, wise, and just. . . .

A veil to draw 'twixt God His Law
And Man's infirmity;
A shadow kind to dumb and blind
The shambles where we die;
A sum to trick th' arithmetic
Too base of leaguing odds;
The spur of trust, the curb of lust —
Thou handmaid of the Gods!"

AUGUST WILHELM SCHLEGEL

LECTURES ON DRAMATIC ART* (1809)

TRANSLATED BY JOHN BLACK

LECTURE XXII

Comparison of the English and Spanish Theatres — Spirit of the Romantic Drama — Shakespeare — His age and the circumstances of his Life.

IN conformity with the plan which we laid down at the first, we shall now proceed to treat of the English and Spanish theatres. We have been, on various occasions, compelled in passing to allude cursorily, sometimes to the one and sometimes to the other, partly for the sake of placing, by means of contrast, many ideas in a clearer light, and partly on account of the influence which these stages have had on the theatres of other countries. Both the English and Spaniards possess a very rich dramatic literature, both have had a number of prolific and highly talented dramatists, among whom even the least admired and celebrated, considered as a whole, display uncommon aptitude for dramatic animation and insight into the essence of theatrical effect. The history of their theatres has no connection with that of the Italians and French, for they developed themselves wholly out of the abundance of their own intrinsic energy, without any foreign influence: the attempts to bring them back to an imitation of the ancients, or even of the French, have either been attended with no success, or not been made till a late period in the decay of the drama. The formation of these two stages, again, is equally independent of each other; the Spanish poets were altogether unacquainted with the English; and in the older and most important period of the English theatre I could discover no trace of any knowledge of Spanish plays

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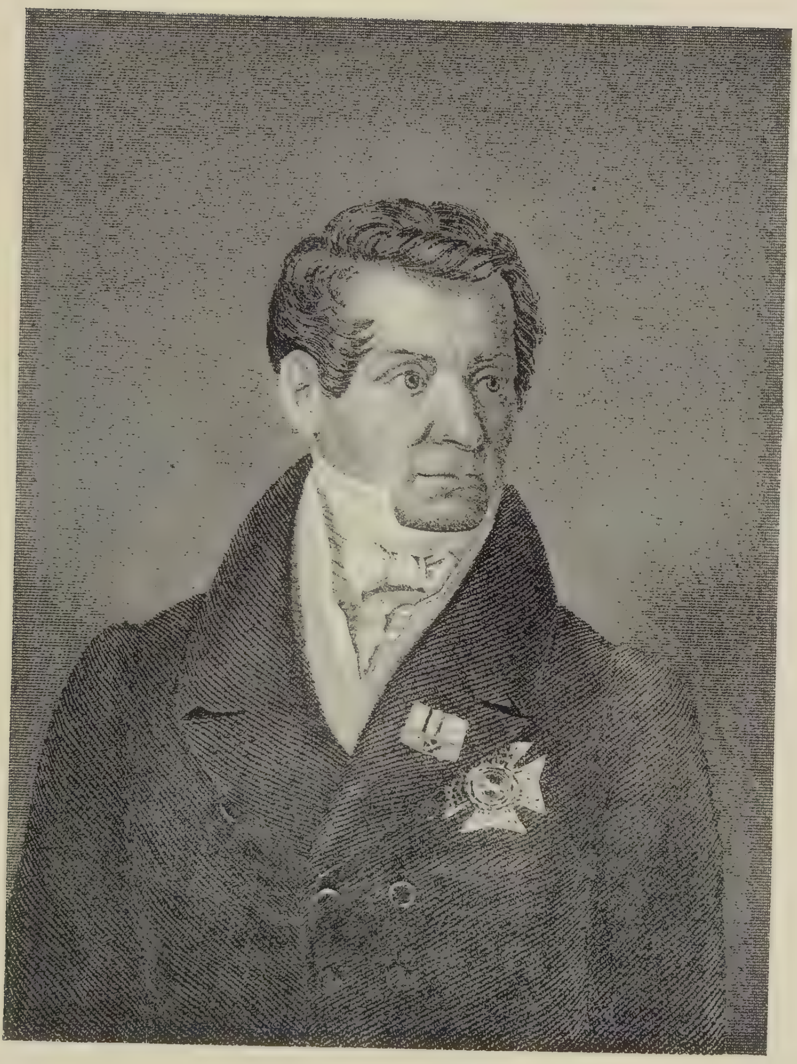
(though their novels and romances were certainly known), and it was not till the time of Charles II. that translations from Calderon first made their appearance.

So many things among men have been handed down from century to century and from nation to nation, and the human mind is in general so slow to invent, that originality in any department of mental exertion is everywhere a rare phenomenon. We are desirous of seeing the result of the efforts of inventive geniuses when, regardless of what in the same line has elsewhere been carried to a high degree of perfection, they set to work in good earnest to invent altogether for themselves; when they lay the foundation of the new edifice on uncovered ground, and draw all the preparations, all the building materials, from their own resources. We participate, in some measure, in the joy of success, when we see them advance rapidly from their first helplessness and need to a finished mastery in their art. The history of the Grecian theatre would afford us this cheering prospect could we witness its rudest beginnings, which were not preserved, for they were not even committed to writing; but it is easy, when we compare Æschylus and Sophocles, to form some idea of the preceding period. The Greeks neither inherited nor borrowed their dramatic art from any other people; it was original and native, and for that very reason was it able to produce a living and powerful effect. But it ended with the period when Greeks imitated Greeks; namely, when the Alexandrian poets began learnedly and critically to compose dramas after the model of the great tragic writers. The reverse of this was the case with the Romans; they received the form and substance of their dramas from the Greeks; they never attempted to act according to their own discretion, or to express their own way of thinking; and hence they occupy so insignificant a place in the history of dramatic art. Among the nations of modern Europe, the English and Spaniards alone (for the German stage is but forming) possess as yet a theatre entirely original and



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national, which, in its own peculiar shape, has arrived at maturity.

Those critics who consider the authority of the ancients, as models, to be such that in poetry, as in all the other arts, there can be no safety out of the pale of imitation, affirm that, as the nations in question have not followed this course, they have brought nothing but irregular works on the stage, which, though they may possess occasional passages of splendor and beauty, must yet, as a whole, be forever reprobated as barbarous and wanting in form. We have already, in the introductory part of these Lectures, stated our sentiments generally on this way of thinking; but we must now examine the subject somewhat more closely.

If the assertion be well founded, all that distinguishes the works of the greatest English and Spanish dramatists, a Shakespeare and a Calderon, must rank them far below the ancients; they could in no wise be of importance for theory, and would at most appear remarkable, on the assumption that the obstinacy of these nations in refusing to comply with the rules may have afforded a more ample field to the poets to display their native originality, though at the expense of art. But even this assumption, on a closer examination, appears extremely questionable. The poetic spirit requires to be limited, that it may move with a becoming liberty within its proper precincts, as has been felt by all nations on the first invention of metre; it must act according to laws derivable from its own essence, otherwise its strength will evaporate in boundless vacuity.

The works of genius cannot therefore be permitted to be without form; but of this there is no danger. However, that we may answer this objection of want of form, we must understand the exact meaning of the term "form," since most critics, and more especially those who insist on a stiff regularity, interpret it merely in a mechanical, and not in an organical sense. Form is mechanical when, through external force, it is imparted to any material merely as an accidental addition without reference to its quality; as, for example, when we give a particular shape to a soft mass that it may retain the same after its induration. Organical form, again, is innate; it unfolds itself from within, and requires its determination contemporaneously with the perfect development of the germ. We everywhere discover such forms in nature throughout the whole range of living powers, from the crystallization of salts and minerals to plants and flowers, and from these again to the human body. In the fine arts, as well as in the domain of nature, the supreme artist, all genuine forms are organical, that is, determined by the quality of the work. In a word, the form is nothing but a significant exterior, the speaking physiognomy of each thing, which, as long as it is not disfigured by any destructive accident, gives a true evidence of its hidden essence.

Hence it is evident that the spirit of poetry, which, though imperishable, migrates, as it were, through different bodies, must, so often as it is newly born in the human race, mold to itself, out of the nutrimental substance of an altered age, a body of a different conformation. The forms vary with the direction taken by the poetical sense; and when we give to the new kinds of poetry the old names, and judge of them according to the ideas conveyed by these names, the application which we make of the authority of classical antiquity is altogether unjustifiable. No one should be tried before a tribunal to which he is not amenable. We may safely admit that most of the English and Spanish dramatic works are neither tragedies nor comedies in the sense of the ancients; they are romantic dramas. That the stage of a people in its foundation and formation, who neither knew nor wished to know anything of foreign models, will possess many peculiarities, and not only deviate from, but even exhibit a striking contrast to, the theatres of other nations who had a common model for imitation before their eyes, is easily supposable, and we should only be astonished were it otherwise. But when

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in two nations, differing so widely as the English and Spanish in physical, moral, political, and religious respects, the theatres (which, without being known to one another, arose about the same time) possess, along with external and internal diversities, the most striking features of affinity, the attention even of the most thoughtless cannot but be turned to this phenomenon; and the conjecture will naturally occur that the same, or, at least, a kindred principle must have prevailed in the development of both. This comparison, however, of the English and Spanish theatre, in their common contrast with every dramatic literature which has grown up out of an imitation of the ancients, has, so far as we know, never yet been attempted. Could we raise from the dead a countryman, a contemporary and intelligent admirer of Shakespeare, and another of Calderon, and introduce to their acquaintance the works of the poet to which in life they were strangers, they would both, without doubt, considering the subject rather from a national than a general point of view, enter with difficulty into the above idea and have many objections to urge against it. But here a reconciling criticism* must step in; and this, perhaps, may be best exercised by a German, who is free from the national peculiarities of either Englishmen or Spaniards, yet by inclination friendly to both, and prevented by no jealousy from acknowledging the greatness which has been earlier exhibited in other countries than his own.

The similarity of the English and Spanish theatres does not consist merely in the bold neglect of the Unities of Place and Time, or in the commixture of comic and tragic elements; that they were unwilling or unable to comply with the rules and with right reason (in the meaning of certain critics these terms are equivalent), may be considered as an evidence of merely negative properties. The ground of the resemblance lies far deeper, in the inmost substance of the fictions and in the essential relations through which every deviation of form becomes a true requisite, which, together with its validity, has also its significance. What they have in common with each other is the spirit of the romantic poetry, giving utterance to itself in a dramatic shape. However, to explain ourselves with due precision, the Spanish theatre, in our opinion, down to its decline and fall in the commencement of the eighteenth century, is almost entirely romantic; the English is completely so in Shakespeare alone, its founder and greatest master; but in later poets the romantic principle appears more or less degenerated, or is no longer perceivable, although the march of dramatic composition introduced by virtue of it has been, outwardly at least, pretty generally retained. The manner in which the different ways of thinking of the two nations, one a northern and the other a southern, have been expressed; the former endowed with a gloomy, the latter with a glowing imagination; the one nation possessed of a scrutinizing seriousness disposed to withdraw within itself, the other impelled outwardly by the violence of passion — the mode in which all this has been accomplished will be most satisfactorily explained at the close of this section, when we come to institute a parallel between Shakespeare and Calderon, the only two poets who are entitled to be called great.

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* This appropriate expression was, if we mistake not, first used by M. Adam Müller in his *Lectures on German Science and Literature.* If, however, he gives himself out as the inventor of the thing itself, he is, to use the softest word, in error. Long before him other Germans had endeavored to reconcile the contrarieties of taste of different ages and nations, and to pay due homage to all genuine poetry and art. Between good and bad, it is true, no reconciliation is possible.

Of the origin and essence of the romantic I treated in my first Lecture, and I shall here, therefore, merely briefly mention the subject. The ancient art and poetry rigorously separate things which are dissimilar; the romantic delights in indissoluble mixtures; all contrarieties — nature and art, poetry and prose, seriousness and mirth, recollection and anticipation, spirituality and sensuality, terrestrial and celestial, life and death, are by it blended in the most intimate combination. As the oldest lawgivers delivered their mandatory instructions and prescriptions in measured melodies; as this is fabulously ascribed to Orpheus, the first softener of the yet untamed race of mortals; in like manner the whole of ancient poetry and art is, as it were, a rhythmical *nomos* (law), a harmonious promulgation of the permanently established legislation of a world submitted to a beautiful order and reflecting in itself the eternal images of things. Romantic poetry, on the other hand, is the expression of the secret attraction to a chaos which lies concealed in the very bosom of the ordered universe, and is perpetually striving after new and marvelous births; the life-giving spirit of primal love broods here anew on the face of the waters. The former is more simple, clear, and like to nature in the self-existent perfection of her separate works; the latter, notwithstanding its fragmentary appearance, approaches nearer to the secret of the universe. For Conception can only comprise each object separately, but nothing in truth can ever exist separately and by itself; Feeling perceives all in all at one and the same time.

Respecting the two species of poetry with which we are here principally occupied, we compared the ancient Tragedy to a group in sculpture, the figures corresponding to the characters, and their grouping to the action; and to these two, in both productions of art, is the consideration exclusively directed, as being all that is properly exhibited. But the romantic drama must be viewed as a large picture, where not merely figure and motion are exhibited in larger, richer groups, but where even all that surrounds the figures must also be portrayed; where we see not merely the nearest objects, but are indulged with the prospect of a considerable distance; and all this under a magical light which assists in giving to the impression the particular character desired.

Such a picture must be bounded less perfectly and less distinctly than the group; for it is like a fragment cut out of the optic scene of the world. However, the painter, by the setting of his foreground, by throwing the whole of his light into the centre, and by other means of fixing the point of view, will learn that he must neither wander beyond the composition nor omit anything within it.

In the representation of figure, Painting cannot compete with Sculpture, since the former can exhibit it only by a deception and from a single point of view; but, on the other hand, it communicates more life to its imitations by colors which in a picture are made to imitate the lightest shades of mental expression in the countenance. The look, which can be given only very imperfectly by Sculpture, enables us to read much deeper in the mind and perceive its lightest movements. Its peculiar charm, in short, consists in this, that it enables us to see in bodily objects what is least corporeal, namely, light and air.

The very same description of beauties are peculiar to the romantic drama. It does not (like the Old Tragedy) separate seriousness and the action, in a rigid manner, from among the whole ingredients of life; it embraces at once the whole of the chequered drama of life with all its circumstances; and while it seems only to represent subjects brought accidentally together, it satisfies the unconscious requisitions of fancy, buries us in reflections on the inexpressible signification of the objects which we view blended by order, nearness and distance, light and color, into one harmonious whole; and thus lends, as it were, a soul to the prospect before us.

The change of time and of place (supposing its influence on the mind to be included in the picture and that it comes to the aid of the theatrical perspective, with reference to what is indicated in the distance, or half-concealed by intervening objects); the contrast of gayety and gravity (supposing that in degree and kind they bear a proportion to each other); finally, the mixture of the dialogical and the lyrical elements (by which the poet is enabled, more or less perfectly, to transform his personages into poetical beings)—these, in my opinion, are not mere licenses, but true beauties in the romantic drama. In all these points, and in many others also, the English and Spanish works, which are preëminently worthy of this title of Romantic, fully resemble each other, however different they may be in other respects.

Of the two we shall first notice the English theatre, because it arrived at maturity earlier than the Spanish. In both we must occupy ourselves almost exclusively with a single artist, with Shakespeare in the one and Calderon in the other; but not in the same order with each, for Shakespeare stands first and earliest among the English; any remarks we may have to make on earlier or contemporary antiquities of the English stage may be made in a review of his history. But Calderon had many predecessors; he is at once the summit and almost the close of dramatic art in Spain.

The wish to speak with the brevity which the limits of my plan demand, of a poet to the study of whom I have devoted many years of my life, places me in no little embarrassment. I know not where to begin; for I should never be able to end, were I to say all that I have felt and thought on the perusal of his works. With the poet, as with the man, a more than ordinary intimacy prevents us, perhaps, from putting ourselves in the place of those who are first forming an acquaintance with him: we are too familiar with his most striking peculiarities to be able to pronounce upon the first impression which they are calculated to make on others. On the other hand, we ought to possess, and to have the power of communicating, more correct ideas of his mode of procedure, of his concealed or less obvious views, and of the meaning and import of his labors, than others whose acquaintance with him is more limited.

Shakespeare is the pride of his nation. A late poet has, with propriety, called him "the genius of the British isles." He was the idol of his contemporaries during the interval, indeed, of puritanical fanaticism, which broke out in the next generation and rigorously proscribed all liberal arts and literature, and, during the reign of the second Charles, when his works were either not acted at all, or, if so, very much changed and disfigured, his fame was awhile obscured, only to shine forth again about the beginning of the last century with more than its original brightness; but since then it has only increased in lustre with the course of time; and for centuries to come (I speak it with the greatest confidence) it will, like an Alpine avalanche, continue to gather strength at every moment of its progress. Of the future extension of his fame, the enthusiasm with which he was naturalized in Germany, the moment that he was known, is a significant earnest. In the South of Europe,* his language and the great difficulty of translating him with fidelity will be, perhaps, an invincible obstacle to his general diffusion. In England, the greatest actors vie with one another in the impersonation of his characters; the printers in splendid editions of his works; and the painters in transferring his scenes to the canvas. Like Dante, Shakespeare has received the perhaps inevitable but still cumbersome honor of being treated like a classical author of antiquity. The oldest editions have been carefully collated, and, where the readings seemed corrupt, many corrections have been suggested; and the whole literature of his age has been drawn forth from the oblivion to which it had been consigned, for the sole purpose of explaining the phrases and illustrating the allusions of Shakespeare. Commentators have succeeded one another in such number that their labors alone, with the critical controversies to which they have given rise, constitute of themselves no inconsiderable library. These labors deserve both our praise and gratitude — more especially the historical investigations into the sources from which Shakespeare drew the materials of his plays and also into the previous and contemporary state of the English stage, as well as other kindred subjects of inquiry. With respect, however, to their merely philological criticisms, I am frequently compelled to differ from the commentators; and where, too, considering him simply as a poet, they endeavor to enter into his views and to decide upon his merits, I must separate myself from them entirely. I have hardly ever found either truth or profundity in their remarks; and these critics seem to me to be but stammering interpreters of the general and almost idolatrous admiration of his countrymen. There may be people in England who entertain the same views of them with myself, at least it is a well-known fact that a satirical poet has represented Shakespeare, under the hands of his commentators, by Actæon worried to death by his own dogs; and, following up the story of Ovid, designated a female writer on the great poet as the snarling Lycisca.

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* This difficulty extends also to France; for it must not be supposed that a literal translation can ever be a faithful one. Mrs. Montague has done enough to prove how wretchedly even Voltaire, in his rhymeless Alexandrines, has translated a few passages from *Hamlet* and the first act of *Julius Cæsar.*

We shall endeavor, in the first place, to remove some of these false views, in order to clear the way for our own homage, that we may thereupon offer it the more freely without let or hindrance.

From all the accounts of Shakespeare which have come down to us it is clear that his contemporaries knew well the treasure they possessed in him, and that they felt and understood him better than most of those who succeeded him. In those days a work was generally ushered into the world with Commendatory Verses; and one of these, prefixed to an early edition of Shakespeare, by an unknown author, contains some of the most beautiful and happy lines that were ever applied to any poet.* An idea, however, soon became prevalent that Shakespeare was a rude and wild genius, who poured forth at random, and without aim or object, his unconnected compositions. Ben Jonson, a younger contemporary and rival of Shakespeare, who labored in the sweat of his brow, but with no great success, to expel the romantic drama from the English stage and to form it on the model of the ancients, gave it as his opinion that Shakespeare did not blot enough, and that, as he did not possess much school-learning, he owed more to nature than to art. The learned, and sometimes rather pedantic Milton was also of this opinion, when he says —

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* It begins with the words: *A mind reflecting ages past,* and is subscribed I. M. S.

Our sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child,
Warbles his native wood-notes wild.

Yet it is highly honorable to Milton that the sweetness of Shakespeare, the quality which of all others has been least allowed, was felt and acknowledged by him. The modern editors, both in their prefaces, which may be considered as so many rhetorical exercises in praise of the poet, and in their remarks on separate passages, go still farther. Judging them by principles which are not applicable to them, not only do they admit the irregularity of his pieces, but, on occasion, they accuse him of bombast, of a confused, ungrammatical, and conceited mode of writing, and even of the most contemptible buffoonery. Pope asserts that he wrote both better and worse than any other man. All the scenes and passages which did not square with the littleness of his own taste, he wished to place to the account of interpolating players; and he was on the right road, had his opinion been taken, of giving us a miserable dole of a mangled Shakespeare. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at if foreigners, with the exception of the Germans latterly, have, in their ignorance of him, even improved upon these opinions.* They speak in general of Shakespeare's plays as monstrous productions, which could have been given to the world only by a disordered imagination in a barbarous age; and Voltaire crowns the whole with more than usual assurance when he observes that *Hamlet*, the profound masterpiece of the philosophical poet, "seems the work of a drunken savage." That foreigners, and, in particular, Frenchmen, who ordinarily speak the most strange language of antiquity and the middle ages, as if cannibalism had been terminated in Europe only by Louis XIV., should entertain this opinion of Shakespeare, might be pardonable; but that Englishmen should join in calumniating that glorious epoch of their history,* which laid the foundation of their national greatness, is incomprehensible.

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* Lessing was the first to speak of Shakespeare in a becoming tone; but he said, unfortunately, a great deal too little of him, as in the time when he wrote the *Dramaturgie* this poet had not yet appeared on our stage. Since that time he has been more particularly noticed by Herder in the *Blätter von deutscher Art und Kunst;* Goethe, in *Wilhelm Meister;* and Tieck, in "Letters on Shakespeare" (*Poetisches Journal,* 1800), which break off, however, almost at the commencement.

Shakespeare flourished and wrote in the last half of the reign of Queen Elizabeth and first half of that of James I.; and, consequently, under monarchs who were learned themselves and held literature in honor. The policy of modern Europe, by which the relations of its different states have been so variously interwoven with one another, commenced a century before. The cause of the Protestants was decided by the accession of Elizabeth to the throne; and the attachment to the ancient belief cannot therefore be urged as a proof of the prevailing darkness. Such was the zeal for the study of the ancients that even court ladies, and the queen herself, were acquainted with Latin and Greek, and taught even to speak the former — a degree of knowledge which we should in vain seek for in the courts of Europe at the present day. The trade and navigation which the English carried on with all the four quarters of the world made them acquainted with the customs and mental productions of other nations; and it would appear that they were then more indulgent to foreign manners than they are in the present day. Italy had already produced nearly all that still distinguishes her literature, and, in England, translations in verse were diligently, and even successfully, executed from the Italian. Spanish literature also was not unknown, for it is certain that *Don Quixote* was read in England soon after its first appearance. Bacon, the founder of modern experimental philosophy, and of whom it may be said that he carried in his pocket all that even in this eighteenth century merits the name of philosophy, was a contemporary of Shakespeare. His fame as a writer did not, indeed, break forth into its glory till after his death; but what a number of ideas must have been in circulation before such an author could arise! Many branches of human knowledge have, since that time, been more extensively cultivated, but such branches as are totally unproductive to poetry — chemistry, mechanics, manufactures, and rural and political economy — will never enable a man to become a poet. I have elsewhere* examined into the pretensions of modern enlightenment, as it is called, which looks with such contempt on all preceding ages; I have shown that at bottom it is all small, superficial, and unsubstantial. The pride of what has been called "the existing maturity of human intensity" has come to a miserable end; and the structures erected by those pedagogues of the human race have fallen to pieces like the baby-houses of children.

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* The English work with which foreigners of every country are perhaps best acquainted is Hume's *History;* and there we have a most unjustifiable account both of Shakespeare and his age. "Born in a *rude age,* and educated in the lowest manner, without any instruction either *from the world* or from books." How could a man of Hume's acuteness suppose for a moment that a poet, whose characters display such an intimate acquaintance with life, who, as an actor and manager of a theatre, must have come in contact with all descriptions of individuals, had no instruction from the world? But this is not the worst; he goes even so far as to say, "a reasonable propriety of thought he cannot for any time uphold." This is nearly as offensive as Voltaire's "drunken savage." — TRANS.

With regard to the tone of society in Shakespeare's day, it is necessary to remark that there is a wide difference between true mental cultivation and what is called polish. That artificial polish which puts an end to everything like free original communication and subjects all intercourse to the insipid uniformity of certain rules, was undoubtedly wholly unknown to the age of Shakespeare, as in a great measure it still is at the present day in England. It possessed, on the other hand, a fulness of healthy vigor, which showed itself always with boldness, and sometimes also with coarseness. The spirit of chivalry was not yet wholly extinct, and a queen, who was far more jealous in exacting homage to her sex than to her throne, and who, with her determination, wisdom, and magnanimity, was in fact well qualified to inspire the minds of her subjects with an ardent enthusiasm, inflamed that spirit to the noblest love of glory and renown. The feudal independence also still survived in some measure; the nobility vied with one another in splendor of dress and number of retinue, and every great lord had a sort of small court of his own. The distinction of ranks was as yet strongly marked — a state of things ardently to be desired by the dramatic poet. In conversation they took pleasure in quick and unexpected answers; and the witty sally passed rapidly like a ball from mouth to mouth, till the merry game could no longer be kept up. This, and the abuse of the play on words (of which King James was himself very fond, and we need not therefore wonder at the universality of the mode), may, doubtless, be considered as instances of a bad taste; but to take them for symptoms of rudeness and barbarity is not less absurd than to infer the poverty of a people from their luxurious extravagance. These strained repartees are frequently employed by Shakespeare, with the view of painting the actual tone of the society in his day; it does not, however, follow that they met with his approbation; on the contrary, it clearly appears that he held them in derision. Hamlet says, in the scene with the gravedigger, "By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it: the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe." And Lorenzo, in the *Merchant of Venice*, alluding to Launcelot:

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* In my lectures on *The Spirit of the Age.*

> O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
> The fool hath planted in his memory
> An army of good words: and I do know
> A many fools, that stand in better place,
> Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word
> Defy the matter.

Besides, Shakespeare, in a thousand places, lays great and marked stress on a correct and refined tone of society, and lashes every deviation from it, whether of boorishness or affected foppery; not only does he give admirable discourses on it, but he represents it in all its shades and modifications by rank, age, or sex. What foundation is there, then, for the alleged barbarity of his age, its offences against propriety? But if this is to be admitted as a test, then the ages of Pericles and Augustus must also be described as rude and uncultivated; for Aristophanes and Horace, who were both considered as models of urbanity, display, at times, the coarsest indelicacy. On this subject, the diversity in the moral feeling of ages depends on other causes. Shakespeare, it is true, sometimes introduces us to improper company; at others, he suffers ambiguous expressions to escape in the presence of women, and even from women themselves. This species of indelicacy was probably not then unusual. He certainly did not indulge in it merely to please the multitude, for in many of his pieces there is not the slightest trace of this sort to be found; and in what virgin purity are many of his female parts worked out! When we see the liberties taken by other dramatic poets in England in his time, and even much later, we must account him comparatively chaste and moral. Neither must we overlook certain circumstances in the existing state of the theatre. The female parts were not acted by women, but by boys; and no person of the fair sex appeared in the theatre without a mask. Under such a carnival disguise, much might be heard by them, and much might be ventured to be said in their presence, which in other circumstances would have been absolutely improper. It is certainly to be wished that decency should be observed on all public occasions, and consequently also on the stage. But even in this it is possible to go too far. That carping censoriousness which scents out impurity in every bold sally, is, at best, but an ambiguous criterion of purity of morals; and beneath this hypocritical guise there often lurks the consciousness of an impure imagination. The determination to tolerate nothing which has the least reference to the sensual relation between the sexes, may be carried to a pitch extremely oppressive to a dramatic poet and highly prejudicial to the boldness and freedom of his compositions. If such considerations were to be attended to, many of the happiest parts of Shakespeare's plays, for example, in *Measure for Measure,* and *All's Well that Ends Well,* which, nevertheless, are handled with a due regard to decency, must be set aside as sinning against this would-be propriety.

Had no other monuments of the age of Elizabeth come down to us than the works of Shakespeare, I should, from them alone, have formed the most favorable idea of its state of social culture and enlightenment. When those who look through such strange spectacles as to see nothing in them but rudeness and barbarity cannot deny what I have now historically proved, they are usually driven to this last resource, and demand, ''What has Shakespeare to do with the mental culture of his age? He had no share in it. Born in an inferior rank, ignorant and uneducated, he passed his life in low society, and labored to please a vulgar audience for his bread, without ever dreaming of fame or posterity.''

In all this there is not a single word of truth, though it has been repeated a thousand times. It is true we know very little of the poet's life; and what we do know consists for the most part of raked-up and chiefly suspicious anecdotes, of about such a character as those which are told at inns to inquisitive strangers who visit the birthplace or neighborhood of a celebrated man. Within a very recent period some original documents have been brought to light, and, among them, his will, which give us a peep into his family concerns. It betrays more than ordinary deficiency of critical acumen in Shakespeare's commentators, that none of them, so far as we know, has ever thought of availing himself of his sonnets for tracing the circumstances of his life. These sonnets paint most unequivocally the actual situation and sentiments of the poet; they make us acquainted with the passions of the man; they even contain remarkable confessions of his youthful errors. Shakespeare's father was a man of property, whose ancestors had held the office of alderman and bailiff in Stratford; and in a diploma from the Heralds' Office for the renewal or confirmation of his coat of arms, he is styled *gentleman.* Our poet, the oldest son but third child, could not, it is true, receive an academic education, as he married when hardly eighteen, probably from mere family considerations. This retired and unnoticed life he continued to lead but a few years; and he was either enticed to London from wearisomeness of his situation, or banished from home, as it is said, in consequence of his irregularities. There he assumed the profession of a player, which he considered at first as a degradation, principally, perhaps, because of the wild excesses * into which he was seduced by the example of his comrades. It is extremely probable that the poetical fame which, in the progress of his career, he afterward acquired, greatly contributed to ennoble the stage and to bring the player's profession into better repute. Even at a very early age he endeavored to distinguish himself as a poet in other walks than those of the stage, as is proved by his juvenile poems of *Adonis* and *Lucrece.* He quickly rose to be a sharer or joint proprietor, and also manager, of the theatre for which he wrote. That he was not admitted to the society of persons of distinction is altogether incredible. Not to mention many others, he found a liberal friend and kind patron in the Earl of Southampton, the friend of the unfortunate Essex. His pieces were not only the delight of the great public, but also in great favor at court; the two monarchs under whose reigns he wrote were, according to the testimony of a contemporary, quite " taken " with him.* Many plays were acted at court; and Elizabeth appears herself to have commanded the writing of more than one to be acted at her court festivals. King James, it is well known, honored Shakespeare so far as to write to him with his own hand. All this looks very unlike either contempt or banishment into the obscurity of a low circle. By his labors as a poet, player, and stage-manager, Shakespeare acquired a considerable property, which, in the last years of his too short life, he enjoyed in his native town in retirement and in the society of a beloved daughter. Immediately after his death a monument was erected over his grave, which may be considered sumptuous for those times.

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* In one of his sonnets he says:

O, for my sake do you with fortune chide
  The guilty goddess of my harmless deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
  Than public means which public manners breeds.

And in the following:

Your love and pity doth the impression fill,
  Which *vulgar scandal* stamp'd upon my brow.

In the midst of such brilliant success, and with such distinguished proofs of respect and honor from his contemporaries, it would be singular indeed if Shakespeare, notwithstanding the modesty of a great mind, which he certainly possessed in a peculiar degree, should never have dreamed of posthumous fame. As a profound thinker he had quite accurately taken the measure of the circle of human capabilities, and he could say to himself with confidence that many of his productions would not easily be surpassed. What foundation then is there for the contrary assertion, which would degrade the immortal artist to the situation of a daily laborer for a rude multitude? Merely this, that he himself published no edition of his whole works. We do not reflect that a poet, always accustomed to labor immediately for the stage, who has often enjoyed the triumph of overpowering assembled crowds of spectators and drawing from them the most tumultuous applause, who the while was not dependent on the caprice of crotchety stage directors, but left to his own discretion to select and determine the mode of theatrical representation, naturally cares much less for the closet of the solitary reader. During the first formation of a national theatre, more especially, we find frequent examples of such indifference. Of the almost innumerable pieces of Lope de Vega, many undoubtedly were never printed, and are consequently lost; and Cervantes did not print his earlier dramas, though he certainly boasts of them as meritorious works. As Shakespeare, on his retiring from the theatre, left his manuscripts behind with his fellow-managers, he may have relied on theatrical tradition for handing them down to posterity, which would indeed have been sufficient for that purpose if the closing of the theatres, under the tyrannical intolerance of the Puritans, had not interrupted the natural order of things. We know, besides, that the poets used then to sell the exclusive copyright of their pieces to the theatre:* it is therefore not improbable that the right of property in his unprinted pieces was no longer vested in Shakespeare, or had not, at least, yet reverted to him. His fellow-managers entered on the publication seven years after his death (which probably cut short his own intention), as it would appear on their own account and for their own advantage.

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* Ben Jonson:

> And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
> That so did take Eliza and our James!

LECTURE XXIII

Ignorance or Learning of Shakespeare — Costume as observed by Shakespeare, and how far necessary, or may be dispensed with in the Drama — Shakespeare the greatest drawer of Character — Vindication of the genuineness of his pathos — Play on words — Moral delicacy — Irony — Mixture of the Tragic and Comic — The part of the Fool or Clown — Shakespeare's Language and Versification.

Our poet's want of scholarship has been the subject of endless controversy, and yet it is surely a very easy matter to decide. Shakespeare was poor in dead school-cram, but he possessed a rich treasury of living and intuitive knowledge. He knew a little Latin, and even something of Greek, though it may be not enough to read with ease the writers in the original. With modern languages also, the French and Italian, he had, perhaps, but a superficial acquaintance. The general direction of his mind was not to the collection of words but of facts. With English books, whether original or translated, he was extensively acquainted: we may safely affirm that he had read all that his native language and literature then contained that could be of any use to him in his poetical avocations. He was sufficiently intimate with mythology to employ it, in the only manner he could wish, in the way of symbolical ornament. He had formed a correct notion of the spirit of Ancient History, and more particularly of that of the Romans; and the history of his own country was familiar to him even in detail. Fortunately for him it had not as yet been treated in a diplomatic and pragmatic spirit, but merely in the chronicle-style; in other words, it had not yet assumed the appearance of dry investigations respecting the development of political relations, diplomatic negotiations, finances, etc., but exhibited a visible image of the life and movement of an age prolific of great deeds. Shakespeare, moreover, was a nice observer of nature; he knew the technical language of mechanics and artisans; he seems to have been well traveled in the interior of his own country, while of others he inquired diligently of traveled navigators respecting their peculiarity of climate and customs. He thus became accurately acquainted with all the popular usages, opinions, and traditions which could be of use in poetry.

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* This is perhaps not uncommon still in some countries. The Venetian Director Medebach, for whose company many of Goldoni's Comedies were composed, claimed an exclusive right to them.— Trans.

The proofs of his ignorance, on which the greatest stress is laid, are a few geographical blunders and anachronisms. Because in a comedy founded on an earlier tale, he makes ships visit Bohemia, he has been the subject of much laughter. But I conceive that we should be very unjust toward him, were we to conclude that he did not, as well as ourselves, possess the useful but by no means difficult knowledge that Bohemia is nowhere bounded by the sea. He could never, in that case, have looked into a map of Germany, but yet describes elsewhere, with great accuracy, the maps of both Indies, together with the discoveries of the latest navigators.* In such matters Shakespeare is faithful only to the details of the domestic stories. In the novels on which he worked, he avoided disturbing the associations of his audience, to whom they were known, by novelties — the correction of errors in secondary and unimportant particulars. The more wonderful the story, the more it ranged in a purely poetical region, which he transfers at will to an indefinite distance. These plays, whatever names they bear, take place in the true land of romance and in the very century of wonderful love stories. He knew well that in the forest of Ardennes there were neither the lions and serpents of the torrid zone, nor the shepherdesses of Arcadia; but he transferred both to it,† because the design and import of his picture required them. Here he considered himself entitled to take the greatest liberties. He had not to do with a hair-splitting, hypercritical age like ours, which is always seeking in poetry for something else than poetry; his audience entered the theatre, not to learn true chronology, geography, and natural history, but to witness a vivid exhibition. I will undertake to prove that Shakespeare's anachronisms are, for the most part, committed of set purpose and deliberately. It was frequently of importance to him to move the exhibited subjects out of the background of time and bring it quite near us. Hence in *Hamlet,* though avowedly an old Northern story, there runs a tone of modish society, and in every respect the customs of the most recent period. Without those circumstantialities it would not have been allowable to make a philosophical inquirer of Hamlet, on which trait, however, the meaning of the whole is made to rest. On that account he mentions his education at a university, though, in the age of the true Hamlet of history, universities were not in existence. He makes him study at Wittenberg, and no selection of a place could have been more suitable. The name was very popular: the story of *Dr. Faustus of Wittenberg* had made it well known; it was of particular celebrity in Protestant England, as Luther had taught and written there shortly before, and the very name must have immediately suggested the idea of freedom in thinking. I cannot even consider it an anachronism that Richard the Third should speak of Machiavelli. The word is here used altogether proverbially: the contents, at least, of the book entitled *Of the Prince (Del Principe)* have been in existence ever since the existence of tyrants; Machiavelli was merely the first to commit them to writing.

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* *Twelfth Night, or What You Will* — Act iii., scene 2.

† *As You Like It.*

That Shakespeare has accurately hit the essential custom, namely, the spirit of ages and nations, is at least acknowledged generally by the English critics; but many sins against external costume may be easily remarked. Yet here it is necessary to bear in mind that the Roman pieces were acted upon the stage of that day in the European dress. This was, it is true, still grand and splendid, not so silly and tasteless as it became toward the end of the seventeenth century. (Brutus and Cassius appeared in the Spanish cloak; they wore, quite contrary to the Roman custom, the sword by their side in time of peace, and, according to the testimony of an eye witness,* it was, in the dialogue where Brutus stimulates Cassius to the conspiracy, drawn, as if involuntarily, half out of the sheath). This does in no way agree with our way of thinking: we are not content without the toga.

The present, perhaps, is not an inappropriate place for a few general observations on costume, considered with reference to art. It has never been more accurately observed than in the present day; art has become a slop-shop for pedantic antiquities. This is because we live in a learned and critical, but by no means poetical age. The ancients before us used, when they had to represent the religions of other nations which deviated very much from their own, to bring them into conformity with the Greek mythology. In Sculpture, again, the same dress, namely, the Phrygian, was adopted, once for all, for every barbaric tribe. Not that they did not know that there were as many different dresses as nations; but in art they merely wished to acknowledge the great contrast between barbarian and civilized: and this, they thought, was rendered most strikingly apparent in the Phrygian garb. The earlier Christian painters represent the Savior, the Virgin Mary, the Patriarchs, and the Apostles in an ideal dress, but the subordinate actors or spectators of the action in the dresses of their own nation and age. Here they were guided by a correct feeling: the mysterious and sacred ought to be kept at an awe-inspiring distance, but the human cannot be rightly understood if seen without its usual accompaniments. In the middle ages all heroical stories of antiquity, from Theseus and Achilles down to Alexander, were metamorphosed into true tales of chivalry. What was related to themselves spoke alone an intelligible language to them; of differences and distinctions they did not care to know. In an old manuscript of the *Iliad,* I saw a miniature illumination representing Hector's funeral procession, where the coffin is hung with noble coats of arms and carried into a Gothic church. It is easy to make merry with this piece of simplicity, but a reflecting mind will see the subject in a very different light. A powerful consciousness of the universal validity and the solid permanency of their own manner of being, an undoubting conviction that it has always so been and will ever continue so to be in the world — these feelings of our ancestors were symptoms of a fresh fulness of life; they were the marrow of action in reality as well as in fiction. Their plain and affectionate attachment to everything around them, handed down from their fathers, is by no means to be confounded with the obstreperous conceit of ages of mannerism, for they, out of vanity, introduce the fleeting modes and fashion of the day into art, because to them everything like noble simplicity seems boorish and rude. The latter impropriety is now abolished: but, on the other hand, our poets and artists, if they would hope for our approbation, must, like servants, wear the livery of distant centuries and foreign nations. We are everywhere at home except at home. We do ourselves the justice to allow that the present mode of dressing, forms of politeness, etc., are altogether unpoetical, and art is therefore obliged to beg, as an alms, a poetical costume from the antiquaries. To that simple way of thinking, which is merely attentive to the inward truth of the composition, without stumbling at anachronisms or other external inconsistencies, we cannot, alas! now return; but we must envy the poets to whom it offered itself; it allowed them a great breadth and freedom in the handling of their subject.

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* In one of the commendatory poems in the first folio edition:

> And on the stage at *half sword parley* were
> Brutus and Cassius.

Many things in Shakespeare must be judged of according to the above principles, respecting the difference between the essential and the merely learned costume. They will also in their measure admit of an application to Calderon.

So much with respect to the spirit of the age in which Shakespeare lived, and his peculiar mental culture and knowledge. To me he appears a profound artist, and not a blind and wildly luxuriant genius. I consider, generally speaking, all that has been said on the subject a mere fable, a blind and extravagant error. In other arts the assertion refutes itself; for in them acquired knowledge is an indispensable condition of clever execution. But even in such poets as are usually given out as careless pupils of nature, devoid of art or school discipline, I have always found, on a nearer consideration of the works of real excellence they may have produced, even a high cultivation of the mental powers, practice in art, and views both worthy in themselves and maturely considered. This applies to Homer as well as to Dante. The activity of genius is, it is true, natural to it, and, in a certain sense, unconscious; and, consequently, the person who possesses it is not always at the moment able to render an account of the course which he may have pursued; but it by no means follows that the thinking power had not a great share in it. It is from the very rapidity and certainty of the mental process, from the utmost clearness of understanding, that thinking in a poet is not perceived as something abstracted, does not wear the appearance of reflex meditation. That notion of poetical inspiration, which many lyrical poets have brought into circulation, as if they were not in their senses, and, like Pythia when possessed by the divinity, delivered oracles unintelligible to themselves — this notion (a mere lyrical invention) is least of all applicable to dramatic composition, one of the most thoughtful productions of the human mind. It is admitted that Shakespeare has reflected, and deeply reflected, on character and passion, on the progress of events and human destinies, on the human constitution, on all the things and relations of the world; this is an admission which must be made, for one alone of thousands of his maxims would be a sufficient refutation of any who should attempt to deny it. So that it was only for the structure of his own pieces that he had no thought to spare? This he left to the dominion of chance, which blew together the atoms of Epicurus. But supposing that, devoid of any higher ambition to approve himself to judicious critics and posterity, and wanting in that love of art which longs for self-satisfaction in the perfection of its works, he had merely labored to please the unlettered crowd; still this very object alone and the pursuit of theatrical effect would have led him to bestow attention to the structure and adherence of his pieces. For does not the impression of a drama depend in an especial manner on the relation of the parts to one another? And, however beautiful a scene may be in itself, if yet it be at variance with what the spectators have been led to expect in its particular place, so as to destroy the interest which they had hitherto felt, will it not be at once reprobated by all who possess plain common sense and give themselves up to nature? The comic intermixtures may be considered merely as a sort of interlude, designed to relieve the straining of the mind after the stretch of the more serious parts, so long as no better purpose can be found in them; but in the progress of the main action, in the concatenation of the events, the poet must, if possible, display even more expenditure of thought than in the composition of individual character and situations, otherwise he would be like the conductor of a puppet-show who has so entangled his wires that the puppets receive from their mechanism quite different movements from those which he actually intended.

The English critics are unanimous in their praise of the truth and uniform consistency of his characters, of his heartrending pathos, and his comic wit. Moreover, they extol the beauty and sublimity of his separate descriptions, images, and expressions. This last is the most superficial and cheap mode of criticising works of art. Johnson compares him who should endeavor to recommend this poet by passages unconnectedly torn from his works, to the pedant in Hierocles, who exhibited a brick as a sample of his house. And yet how little, and how very unsatisfactorily does he himself speak of the pieces considered as a whole! Let any man, for instance, bring together the short characters which he gives at the close of each play, and see if the aggregate will amount to that sum of admiration which he himself, at his outset, has stated as the correct standard for the appreciation of the poet. It was, generally speaking, the prevailing tendency of the time which preceded our own, and which has showed itself particularly in physical science, to consider everything having life as a mere accumulation of dead parts, to separate what exists only in connection and cannot otherwise be conceived, instead of penetrating to the central point and viewing all the parts as so many irradiations from it. Hence nothing is so rare as a critic who can elevate himself to the comprehensive contemplation of a work of art. Shakespeare's compositions, from the very depth of purpose displayed in them, have been especially liable to the misfortune of being misunderstood. Besides, this prosaic species of criticism requires always that the poetic form should be applied to the details of execution; but when the plan of the piece is concerned, it never looks for more than the logical connection of causes and effects, or some partial and trite moral by way of application; and all that cannot be reconciled therewith is declared superfluous, or even a pernicious appendage. On these principles we must even strike out from the Greek tragedies most of the choral songs, which also contribute nothing to the development of the action, but are merely an harmonious echo of the impressions the poet aims at conveying. In this they altogether mistake the rights of poetry and the nature of the romantic drama, which, for the very reason that it is and ought to be picturesque, requires richer accompaniments and contrasts for its main groups. In all Art and Poetry, but more especially in the romantic, the Fancy lays claims to be considered as an independent mental power governed according to its own laws.

In an essay on *Romeo and Juliet*,* written a number of years ago, I went through the whole of the scenes in their order and demonstrated the inward necessity of each with reference to the whole; I showed why such a particular circle of characters and relations was placed around the two lovers; I explained the signification of the mirth here and there scattered, and justified the use of the occasional heightening given to the poetical colors. From all this it seemed to follow unquestionably that, with the exception of a few criticisms, now become unintelligible or foreign to the present taste (imitations of the tone of society of that day), nothing could be taken away, nothing added, nothing otherwise arranged, without mutilating and disfiguring the perfect work. I would readily undertake to do the same for all the pieces of Shakespeare's maturer years, but to do this would require a separate book. Here I am reduced to confine my observations to tracing his great designs with a rapid pencil; but still I must previously be allowed to deliver my sentiments in a general manner on the subject of his most eminent peculiarities.

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* In the first volume of *Charakteristiken und Kritiken*, published by my brother and myself.

Shakespeare's knowledge of mankind has become proverbial: in this his superiority is so great that he has justly been called the master of the human heart. A readiness to remark the mind's fainter and involuntary utterances, and the power to express with certainty the meaning of these signs, as determined by experience and reflection, constitute "the observer of men;" but tacitly to draw from these still further conclusions and to arrange the separate observations according to grounds of probability into a just and valid combination — this, it may be said, is to know men. The distinguishing property of the dramatic poet who is great in characterization, is something altogether different here, and which, take it which way we will, either includes in it this readiness and this acuteness, or dispenses with both. It is the capability of transporting himself so completely into every situation, even the most unusual, that he is enabled, as plenipotentiary of the whole human race, without particular instructions for each separate case, to act and speak in the name of every individual. It is the power of endowing the creatures of his imagination with such self-existent energy that they afterward act in each conjuncture according to general laws of nature: the poet, in his dreams, institutes, as it were, experiments which are received with as much authority as if they had been made on waking objects. The inconceivable element herein, and what moreover can never be learned, is, that the characters appear neither to do nor to say anything on the spectator's account merely; and yet that the poet, simply by means of the exhibition, and without any subsidiary explanation, communicates to his audience the gift of looking into the inmost recesses of their minds. Hence Goethe has ingeniously compared Shakespeare's characters to watches with crystalline plates and cases, which, while they point out the hours as correctly as other watches, enable us at the same time to perceive the inward springs whereby all this is accomplished.

Nothing, however, is more foreign to Shakespeare than a certain anatomical style of exhibition, which laboriously enumerates all the motives by which a man is determined to act in this or that particular manner. This rage of supplying motives, the mania of so many modern historians, might be carried at length to an extent which would abolish everything like individuality, and resolve all character into nothing but the effect of foreign or external influences, whereas we know that it often announces itself most decidedly in earliest infancy. After all, a man acts so because he is so. And what each man is, that Shakespeare reveals to us most immediately: he demands and obtains our belief even for what is singular, and deviates from the ordinary course of nature. Never perhaps was there so comprehensive a talent for characterization as Shakespeare. It not only grasps every diversity of rank, age, and sex, down to the lispings of infancy; not only do the king and the beggar, the hero and the pickpocket, the sage and the idiot, speak and act with equal truthfulness; not only does he transport himself to distant ages and foreign nations, and portray with the greatest accuracy (a few apparent violations of costume excepted) the spirit of the ancient Romans, of the French in the wars with the English, of the English themselves during a great part of their history, of the Southern Europeans (in the serious part of many comedies), the cultivated society of the day, and the rude barbarism of a Norman fore-time; his human characters have not only such depth and individuality that they do not admit of being classed under common names, and are inexhaustible even in conception: no, this Prometheus not merely forms men, he opens the gates of the magical world of spirits, calls up the midnight ghost, exhibits before us the witches with their unhallowed rites, peoples the air with sportive fairies and sylphs; and these beings, though existing only in the imagination, nevertheless possess such truth and consistency that even with such misshapen abortions as Caliban, he extorts the assenting conviction that, were there such beings, they would so conduct themselves. In a word, as he carries a bold and pregnant fancy into the kingdom of nature, on the other hand he carries nature into the region of fancy which lie beyond the confines of reality. We are lost in astonishment at the close intimacy he brings us into with the extraordinary, the wonderful, and the unheard-of.

Pope and Johnson appear strangely to contradict each other, when the first says, "all the characters of Shakespeare are individuals," and the second, "they are species." And yet perhaps these opinions may admit of reconciliation. Pope's expression is unquestionably the more correct. A character which should be merely a personification of a naked general idea could neither exhibit any great depth nor any great variety. The names of genera and species are well known to be merely auxiliaries for the understanding, that we may embrace the infinite variety of nature in a certain order. The characters which Shakespeare has so thoroughly delineated have undoubtedly a number of individual peculiarities, but at the same time they possess a significance which is not applicable to them alone: they generally supply materials for a profound theory of their most prominent and distinguishing property. But even with the above correction, this opinion must still have its limitations. Characterization is merely one ingredient of the dramatic art, and not dramatic poetry itself. It would be improper in the extreme, if the poet were to draw our attention to superfluous traits of character at a time when it ought to be his endeavor to produce other impressions. Whenever the musical or the fanciful preponderates, the characteristical necessarily falls into the background. Hence many of the figures of Shakespeare exhibit merely external designations, determined by the place which they occupy in the whole: they are like secondary persons in a public procession, to whose physiognomy we seldom pay much attention; their only importance is derived from the solemnity of their dress and the duty in which they are engaged. Shakespeare's messengers, for instance, are for the most part mere messengers, and yet not common, but poetical messengers: the message which they have to bring is the soul which suggests to them their language. Other voices, too, are merely raised to pour forth these as melodious lamentations or rejoicings, or to dwell in reflection on what has taken place; and in a serious drama without chorus this must always be more or less the case, if we would not have it prosaic.

If Shakespeare deserves our admiration for his characters, he is equally deserving of it for his exhibition of passion, taking this word in its widest signification, as including every mental condition, every tone, from indifference or familiar mirth to the wildest rage and despair. He gives us the history of minds; he lays open to us, in a single word, a whole series of their anterior states. His passions do not stand at the same height, from first to last, as is the case with so many tragic poets, who, in the language of Lessing, are thorough masters of the legal style of love. He paints, with inimitable veracity, the gradual advance from the first origin; "he gives," as Lessing says, "a living picture of all the slight and secret artifices by which a feeling steals into our souls, of all the imperceptible advantages which it there gains, of all the stratagems by which it makes every other passion subservient to itself, till it becomes the sole tyrant of our desires and our aversions." Of all the poets, perhaps, he alone has portrayed the mental diseases, melancholy, delirium, lunacy, with such inexpressible and, in every respect, definite truth, that the physician may enrich his observations from them in the same manner as from real cases.

And yet Johnson has objected to Shakespeare that his pathos is not always natural and free from affectation. There are, it is true, passages, though comparatively speaking very few, where his poetry exceeds the bounds of actual dialogue, where a too soaring imagination, a too luxuriant wit, rendered a complete dramatic forgetfulness of himself impossible. With this exception, the censure originated in a fanciless way of thinking, to which everything appears unnatural that does not consort with its own tame insipidity. Hence an idea has been formed of simple and natural pathos, which consists in exclamations destitute of imagery and nowise elevated above everyday life. But energetical passions electrify all the mental powers, and will consequently, in highly-favored natures, give utterance to themselves in ingenious and figurative expressions. It has been often remarked that indignation makes a man witty; and as despair occasionally breaks out into laughter, it may sometimes also give vent to itself in antithetical comparisons.

Besides, the rights of the poetical form have not been duly weighed. Shakespeare, who was always sure of his power to excite, when he wished, sufficiently powerful emotions, has occasionally, by indulging in a freer play of fancy, purposely tempered the impressions when too painful, and immediately introduced a musical softening of our sympathy.* He had not those rude ideas of his art which many moderns seem to have, as if the poet, like the clown in the proverb, must strike twice on the same place. An ancient rhetorician delivered a caution against dwelling too long on the excitation of pity; for nothing, he said, dries so soon as tears; and Shakespeare acted conformably to this ingenious maxim without having learned it. The paradoxical assertion of Johnson that "Shakespeare had a greater talent for comedy than tragedy, and that in the latter he has frequently displayed an affected tone," is scarcely deserving of lengthy notice. For its refutation, it is unnecessary to appeal to the great tragical compositions of the poet, which, for overpowering effect, leave far behind them almost everything that the stage has seen besides; a few of their less celebrated scenes would be quite sufficient. What to many readers might lend an appearance of truth to this assertion are the verbal witticisms, that playing upon words, which Shakespeare not unfrequently introduces into serious and sublime passages and even into those also of a peculiarly pathetic nature.

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* A contemporary of the poet, the author of the already-noticed poem, (subscribed I. M. S.), tenderly felt this when he said:

Yet so to temper passion that our ears
Take pleasure in their pain, and eyes in tears
Both smile and weep.

I have already stated the point of view in which we ought to consider this sportive play upon words. I shall here, therefore, merely deliver a few observations respecting the playing upon words in general, and its poetical use. A thorough investigation would lead us too far from our subject, and too deeply into considerations on the essence of language, and its relation to poetry, or rhyme, etc.

There is in the human mind a desire that language should exhibit the object which it denotes, sensibly, by its very sound, which may be traced even as far back as in the first origin of poetry. As, in the shape in which language comes down to us, this is seldom perceptibly the case, an imagination which has been powerfully excited is fond of laying hold of any congruity in sound which may accidentally offer itself, that by such means he may, for the nonce, restore the lost resemblance between the word and the thing. For example, how common was it and is it to seek in the name of a person, however arbitrarily bestowed, a reference to his qualities and fortunes — to convert it purposely into a significant name. Those who cry out against the play upon words as an unnatural and affected invention, only betray their own ignorance of original nature. A great fondness for it is always evinced among children, as well as with nations of simple manners, among whom correct ideas of the derivation and affinity of words have not yet been developed, and do not, consequently, stand in the way of this caprice. In Homer we find several examples of it; the Books of Moses, the oldest written memorial of the primitive world, are, as is well known, full of them. On the other hand, poets of a very cultivated taste, like Petrarch, or orators, like Cicero, have delighted in them. Whoever, in *Richard the Second*, is disgusted with the affecting play of words of the dying John of Gaunt on his own name, should remember that the same thing occurs in the *Ajax* of Sophocles. We do not mean to say that all playing upon words is on all occasions to be justified. This must depend on the disposition of mind, whether it will admit of such a play of fancy, and whether the sallies, comparisons, and allusions, which lie at the bottom of them, possess internal solidity. Yet we must not proceed upon the principle of trying how the thought appears after it is deprived of the resemblance in sound, any more than we are to endeavor to feel the charm of rhymed versification after depriving it of its rhyme. The laws of good taste on this subject must, moreover, vary with the quality of the languages. In those which possess a great number of homonymes, that is, words possessing the same, or nearly the same, sound, though quite different in their derivation and signification, it is almost more difficult to avoid, than to fall on such a verbal play. It has, however, been feared, lest a door might be opened to puerile witticism, if they were not rigorously proscribed. But I cannot, for my part, find that Shakespeare had such an invincible and immoderate passion for this verbal witticism. It is true, he sometimes makes a most lavish use of this figure; at others, he has employed it very sparingly; and at times (for example, in *Macbeth*) I do not believe a vestige of it is to be found. Hence, in respect to the use or the rejection of the play upon words, he must have been guided by the measure of the objects and the different style in which they required to be treated, and probably have followed here, as in everything else, principles which, fairly examined, will bear a strict examination.

The objection that Shakespeare wounds our feelings by the open display of the most disgusting moral odiousness, unmercifully harrows up the mind, and tortures even our eyes by the exhibition of the most insupportable and hateful spectacles, is one of greater and graver importance. He has, in fact, never varnished over wild and bloodthirsty passions with a pleasing exterior — never clothed crime and want of principle with a false show of greatness of soul; and in that respect he is every way deserving of praise. Twice he has portrayed downright villains, and the masterly way in which he has contrived to elude impressions of too painful a nature may be seen in Iago and Richard the Third. I allow that the reading, and still more the sight, of some of his pieces, is not advisable to weak nerves, any more than was the *Eumenides* of Æschylus; but is the poet, who can reach an important object only by a bold and hazardous daring, to be checked by considerations for such persons? If the effeminacy of the present day is to serve as a general standard of what tragical composition may properly exhibit to human nature, we shall be forced to set very narrow limits indeed to art, and the hope of anything like powerful effect must at once and forever be renounced. If we wish to have a grand purpose, we must also wish to have the grand means, and our nerves ought in some measure to accommodate themselves to painful impressions, if, by way of requital, our mind is thereby elevated and strengthened. The constant reference to a petty and puny race must cripple the boldness of the poet. Fortunately for his art, Shakespeare lived in an age extremely susceptible of noble and tender impressions, but which had yet inherited enough of the firmness of a vigorous olden time not to shrink with dismay from every strong and forcible painting. We have lived to see tragedies of which the catastrophe consists in the swoon of an enamored princess: if Shakespeare falls occasionally into the opposite extreme, it is a noble error, originating in the fulness of a gigantic strength. And this tragical Titan, who storms the heavens and threatens to tear the world off its hinges, who, more terrible than Æschylus, makes our hair stand on end and congeals our blood with horror, possessed at the same time the insinuating loveliness of the sweetest poesy; he toys with love like a child, and his songs die away on the ear like melting sighs. He unites in his soul the utmost elevation and the utmost depth; and the most opposite and even apparently irreconcilable properties subsist in him peaceably together. The world of spirits and nature have laid all their treasures at his feet: in strength a demi-god, in profundity of view a prophet, in all-seeing wisdom a guardian spirit of a higher order, he lowers himself to mortals as if unconscious of his superiority, and is as open and unassuming as a child.

If the delineation of all his characters, separately considered, is inimitably bold and correct, he surpasses even himself in so combining and contrasting them that they serve to bring out one anothers' peculiarities. This is the very perfection of dramatic characterization: for we can never estimate a man's true worth if we consider him altogether abstractedly by himself; we must see him in his relations with others; and it is here that most dramatic poets are deficient. Shakespeare makes each of his principal characters the glass in which the others are reflected, and by like means enables us to discover what could not be immediately revealed to us. What in others is most profound, is with him but surface. Ill-advised should we be were we always to take men's declarations respecting themselves and others for sterling coin. Ambiguity of design with much propriety he makes to overflow with the most praiseworthy principles; and sage maxims are not infrequently put in the mouth of stupidity, to show how easily such commonplace truisms may be acquired. Nobody ever painted so truthfully as he has done the facility of self-deception, the half self-conscious hypocrisy toward ourselves, with which even noble minds attempt to disguise the almost inevitable influence of selfish motives in human nature. This secret irony of the characterization commands admiration as the profound abyss of acuteness and sagacity; but it is the grave of enthusiasm. We arrive at it only after we have had the misfortune to see human nature through and through, and after no choice remains but to adopt the melancholy truth that "no virtue or greatness is altogether pure and genuine," or the dangerous error that "the highest perfection is attainable." Here we therefore may perceive in the poet himself, notwithstanding his power to excite the most fervent emotions, a certain cool indifference, but still the indifference of a superior mind, which has run through the whole sphere of human existence and survived feeling.

The irony in Shakespeare has not merely a reference to the separate characters, but frequently to the whole of the action. Most poets who portray human events in a narrative or dramatic form themselves take a part, and exact from their readers a blind approbation or condemnation of whatever side they choose to support or oppose. The more zealous this rhetoric is, the more certainly it fails of its effect. In every case we are conscious that the subject itself is not brought immediately before us, but that we view it through the medium of a different way of thinking. When, however, by a dextrous manœuvre, the poet allows us an occasional glance at the less brilliant reverse of the medal, then he makes, as it were, a sort of secret understanding with the select circle of the more intelligent of his readers or spectators; he shows them that he had previously seen and admitted the validity of their tacit objections; that he himself is not tied down to the represented subject, but soars freely above it; and that, if he chose, he could unrelentingly annihilate the beautiful and irresistibly attractive scenes which his magic pen has produced. No doubt, wherever the proper tragic enters, everything like irony immediately ceases; but from the avowed raillery of Comedy, to the point where the subjection of mortal beings to an inevitable destiny demands the highest degree of seriousness, there are a multitude of human relations which unquestionably may be considered in an ironical view, without confounding the eternal line of separation between good and evil. This purpose is answered by the comic characters and scenes which are interwoven with the serious parts in most of those pieces of Shakespeare where romantic fables or historical events are made the subject of a noble and elevating exhibition. Frequently an intentional parody of the serious part is not to be mistaken in them; at other times the connection is more arbitrary and loose, and the more so, the more marvelous the invention of the whole and the more entirely it has become a light reveling of the fancy. The comic intervals everywhere serve to prevent the pastime from being converted into a business, to preserve the mind in the possession of its serenity, and to keep off that gloomy and inert seriousness which so easily steals upon the sentimental, but not tragical, drama. Most assuredly Shakespeare did not intend thereby, in defiance to his own better judgment, to humor the taste of the multitude: for in various pieces, and throughout considerable portions of others, and especially when the catastrophe is approaching, and the mind consequently is more on the stretch and no longer likely to give heed to any amusement which would distract their attention, he has abstained from all such comic intermixtures. It was also an object with him, that the clowns or buffoons should not occupy a more important place than that which he had assigned them: he expressly condemns the extemporizing with which they loved to enlarge their parts.* Johnson founds the justification of the species of drama in which seriousness and mirth are mixed, on this, that in real life the vulgar is found close to the sublime, that the merry and the sad usually accompany and succeed each other. But it does not follow that, because both are found together, therefore they must not be separable in the compositions of art. The observation is in other respects just, and this circumstance invests the poet with a power to adopt this procedure, because everything in the drama must be regulated by the conditions of theatrical probability; but the mixture of such dissimilar, and apparently contradictory, ingredients, in the same works, can be justifiable only on principles reconcilable with the views of art which I have already described. In the dramas of Shakespeare the comic scenes are the antechamber of the poetry, where the servants remain; these prosaic attendants must not raise their voices so high as to deafen the speakers in the presence-chamber; however, in those intervals when the ideal society has retired they deserve to be listened to; their bold raillery, their presumption of mockery, may afford many an insight into the situation and circumstances of their masters.

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* In Hamlet's directions to the players. Act iii., scene 2.

Shakespeare's comic talent is equally wonderful with that which he has shown in the pathetic and tragic: it stands on an equal elevation, and possesses equal extent and profundity; in all that I have hitherto said, I only wished to guard against admitting that the former preponderated. He is highly inventive in comic situations and motives: it will be hardly possible to show whence he has taken any of them, whereas, in the serious part of his dramas, he has generally laid hold of some well-known story. His comic characterization is equally true, various, and profound, with his serious. So little is he disposed to caricature, that rather, it may be said, many of his traits are almost too nice and delicate for the stage, that they can be made available only by a great actor and fully understood only by an acute audience. Not only has he delineated many kinds of folly, but even of sheer stupidity has he contrived to give a most diverting and entertaining picture. There is also in his pieces a peculiar species of the farcical, which apparently seems to be introduced more arbitrarily, but which, however, is founded on imitation of some actual custom. This is the introduction of the merrymaker, the fool with his cap and bells and motley dress, called more commonly in England "clown," who appears in several comedies, though not in all, but, of the tragedies, in *Lear* alone, and who generally merely exercises his wit in conversation with the principal persons, though he is also sometimes incorporated into the action. In those times it was not only usual for princes to have their court fools, but many distinguished families, among their other retainers, kept such an exhilarating house-mate as a good antidote against the insipidity and wearisomeness of ordinary life, and as a welcome interruption of established formalities. Great statesmen, and even ecclesiastics, did not consider it beneath their dignity to recruit and solace themselves after important business with the conversation of their fools; the celebrated Sir Thomas More had his fool painted along with himself by Holbein. Shakespeare appears to have lived immediately before the time when the custom began to be abolished; in the English comic authors who succeeded him the clown is no longer to be found. The dismissal of the fool has been extolled as a proof of refinement; and our honest forefathers have been pitied for taking delight in such a coarse and farcical amusement. For my part, I am rather disposed to believe that the practice was dropped from the difficulty in finding fools able to do full justice to their parts:* on the other hand, reason, with all its conceit of itself, has become too timid to tolerate such bold irony; it is always careful lest the mantle of its gravity should be disturbed in any of its folds; and rather than allow a privileged place to folly beside itself, it has unconsciously assumed the part of the ridiculous; but, alas! a heavy and cheerless ridicule.* It would be easy to make a collection of the excellent sallies and biting sarcasms which have been preserved of celebrated court fools. It is well known that they frequently told such truths to princes as are never now told to them.† Shakespeare's fools, along with somewhat of an overstraining for wit, which cannot altogether be avoided when wit becomes a separate profession, have for the most part an incomparable humor and an infinite abundance of intellect, enough indeed to supply a whole host of ordinary wise men.

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* See Hamlet's praise of Yorick. In *Twelfth Night*, Viola says:

> This fellow is wise enough to play the fool,
> And to do that well craves a kind of wit;
> He must observe their mood on whom he jests,
> The quality of the persons, and the time;
> And like the haggard, check at every feather
> That comes before his eye. This is a practice
> As full of labor as a wise man's art:
> For folly that he wisely shows is fit,
> But wise men's folly fall'n quite taints their wit.—AUTHOR.

The passages from Shakespeare, in the original work, are given from the author's masterly translation. We may be allowed, however, to observe that the last line—

> "Doch wozu ist des Weisen Thorheit nutz?"

literally, *Of what use is the folly of the wise?*—does not convey the exact meaning of Shakespeare.—TRANS.

I have still a few observations to make on the diction and versification of our poet. The language is here and there somewhat obsolete, but on the whole much less so than in most of the contemporary writers — a sufficient proof of the goodness of his choice. Prose had as yet been but little cultivated, as the learned generally wrote in Latin — a favorable circumstance for the dramatic poet; for what has he to do with the scientific language of books? He had not only read, but studied, the earlier English poets; but he drew his language immediately from life itself, and he possessed a masterly skill in blending the dialogical element with the highest poetical elevation. I know not what certain critics mean, when they say that Shakespeare is frequently ungrammatical. To make good their assertion, they must prove that similar constructions never occur in his contemporaries, the direct contrary of which can, however, be easily shown. In no language is everything determined on principle; much is always left to the caprice of custom, and if this has since changed, is the poet to be made answerable for it? The English language had not then attained to that correct insipidity which has been introduced into the more recent literature of the country, to the prejudice, perhaps, of its originality. As a field when first brought under the plough produces, along with the fruitful shoots, many luxuriant weeds, so the poetical diction of the day ran occasionally into extravagance, but an extravagance originating in the exuberance of its vigor. We may still perceive traces of awkwardness, but nowhere of a labored and spiritless display of art. In general, Shakespeare's style yet remains the very best model, both in the vigorous and sublime, and the pleasing and tender. In his sphere he has exhausted all the means and appliances of language. On all he has impressed the stamp of his mighty spirit. His images and figures, in their unsought, nay, uncapricious singularity, have often a sweetness altogether peculiar. He becomes occasionally obscure from too great fondness for compressed brevity; but still, the labor of poring over Shakespeare's lines will invariably meet an ample requital.

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* "Since the little wit that fools have was silenced, the little foolery that wise men have makes a greater show." —*As You Like It*, Act I, scene 2.

† Charles the Bold, of Burgundy, is known to have frequently boasted that he wished to rival Hannibal as the greatest general of all ages. After his defeat at Granson, his fool accompanied him in his hurried flight, and exclaimed, "Ah, your Grace, they have for once Hanniballed us!" If the Duke had given an ear to this warning raillery, he would not so soon afterward have come to a disgraceful end.

The verse in all his plays is generally the rhymeless iambic of ten or eleven syllables, only occasionally intermixed with rhymes, but more frequently alternating with prose. No one piece is written entirely in prose; for even in those which approach the most to the pure Comedy, there is always something added which gives them a more poetical hue than usually belongs to this species. Many scenes are wholly in prose, in others verse and prose succeed each other alternately. This can appear an impropriety only in the eyes of those who are accustomed to consider the lines of a drama like so many soldiers drawn up rank and file on a parade, with the same uniform, arms, and accoutrements, so that when we see one or two we may represent to ourselves thousands as being every way like them.

In the use of verse and prose Shakespeare observes very nice distinctions according to the ranks of the speakers, but still more according to their characters and disposition of mind. A noble language, elevated above the usual tone, is suitable only to a certain decorum of manners, which is thrown over both vices and virtues and which does not even wholly disappear amidst the violence of passion. If this is not exclusively possessed by the higher ranks, it still, however, belongs naturally more to them than to the lower; and therefore, in Shakespeare, dignity and familiarity of language, poetry, and prose, are in this manner distributed among the characters. Hence his tradesmen, peasants, soldiers, sailors, servants, but more especially his fools and clowns, speak, almost without exception, in the tone of their actual life. However, inward dignity of sentiment, wherever it is possessed, invariably displays itself with a nobleness of its own, and stands not in need, for that end, of the artificial elegancies of education and custom; it is a universal right of man, of the highest as well as the lowest; and hence also, in Shakespeare, the nobility of nature and morality is ennobled above the artificial nobility of society. Not infrequently also he makes the very same persons express themselves at times in the sublimest language, and at others in the lowest; and this inequality is in like manner founded in truth. Extraordinary situations, which intensely occupy the head and throw mighty passions into play, give elevation and tension to the soul: it collects all its powers and exhibits an unusual energy, both in its operations and in its communications by language. On the other hand, even the greatest men have their moments of remissness, when to a certain degree they forget the dignity of their character in unreserved relaxation. This very tone of mind is necessary before they can receive amusement from the jokes of others, or, what surely cannot dishonor even a hero, from passing jokes themselves. Let any person, for example, go carefully through the part of Hamlet. How bold and powerful the language of his poetry when he conjures the ghost of his father, when he spurs himself on to the bloody deed, when he thunders into the soul of his mother! How he lowers his tone down to that of common life, when he has to do with persons whose station demands from him such a line of conduct; when he makes game of Polonius and the courtiers, instructs the player, and even enters into the jokes of the grave-digger. Of all the poet's serious leading characters there is none so rich in wit and humor as Hamlet; hence he it is of all of them that makes the greatest use of the familiar style. Others, again, never do fall into it; either because they are constantly surrounded by the pomp of rank, or because a uniform seriousness is natural to them; or, in short, because through the whole piece they are under the dominion of a passion calculated to excite, and not, like the sorrow of Hamlet, to depress the mind. The choice of the one form or the other is everywhere so appropriate, and so much founded in the nature of the thing, that I will venture to assert, even where the poet in the very same speech makes the speaker leave prose for poetry, or the converse, this could not be altered without danger of injuring or destroying some beauty or other. The blank verse has this advantage, that its tone may be elevated or lowered; it admits of approximation to the familiar style of conversation, and never forms such an abrupt contrast as that, for example, between plain prose and the rhyming Alexandrines.

Shakespeare's iambics are sometimes highly harmonious and full-sounding; always varied and suitable to the subject, at one time distinguished by ease and rapidity, at another they move along with ponderous energy. They never fall out of the dialogical character, which may always be traced even in the continued discourses of individuals, excepting when the latter run into the lyrical. They are a complete model of the dramatic use of this species of verse, which, in English, since Milton, has been also used in epic poetry; but in the latter it has assumed a quite different turn. Even the irregularities of Shakespeare's versification are expressive; a verse broken off, or a sudden change of rhythmus, coincides with some pause in the progress of the thought, or the entrance of another mental disposition. As a proof that he purposely violated the mechanical rules, from a conviction that a too symmetrical versification does not suit with the drama, and, on the stage has in the long run a tendency to lull the spectators to sleep, we may observe that his earlier pieces are the most diligently versified, and that, in the later works, when through practice he must have acquired a greater facility, we find the strongest deviations from the regular structure of the verse. As it served with him merely to make the poetical elevation perceptible, he therefore claimed the utmost possible freedom in the use of it.

The views or suggestions of feeling by which he was guided in the use of rhyme may likewise be traced with almost equal certainty. Not infrequently scenes, or even single speeches, close with a few rhyming lines, for the purpose of more strongly marking the division, and of giving it more rounding. This was injudiciously imitated by the English tragic poets of a later date; they suddenly elevated the tone in the rhymed lines, as if the person began all at once to speak in another language. The practice was welcomed by the actors from its serving as a signal for clapping when they made their exit. In Shakespeare, on the other hand, the transitions are more easy: all changes of forms are brought about insensibly, and as if of themselves. Moreover, he is generally fond of heightening a series of ingenious and antithetical sayings by the use of rhyme. We find other passages in continued rhyme, where solemnity and theatrical pomp were suitable, as, for instance, in the mask,* as it is called, in *The Tempest* and in the play introduced in *Hamlet*. Of other pieces, for instance, the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, the rhymes form a considerable part; either because he may have wished to give them a glowing color, or because the characters appropriately utter in a more musical tone their complaints or suits of love. In these cases he has even introduced rhymed strophes, which approach to the form of the sonnet, then usual in England. The assertion of Malone, that Shakespeare in his youth was fond of rhyme, but that he afterward rejected it, is sufficiently refuted by his own chronology of the poet's works. In some of the earliest, for instance in the second and third part of *Henry the Sixth,* there are hardly any rhymes; in what is stated to be his last piece, *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, and in *Macbeth*, which is proved to have been composed under the reign of King James, we find them in no inconsiderable number. Even in the secondary matters of form Shakespeare was not guided by humor and accident, but, like a genuine artist, acted invariably on good and solid grounds. This we might also show of the kinds of verse which he least frequently used (for instance, of the rhyming verses of seven and eight syllables), were we not afraid of dwelling too long on merely technical peculiarities.

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* I shall take the opportunity of saying a few words respecting this species of drama when I come to speak of Ben Jonson.

In England the manner of handling rhyming verse, and the opinion as to its harmony and elegance, have, in the course of two centuries, undergone a much greater change than is the case with the rhymeless iambic or blank verse. In the former, Dryden and Pope have become models; these writers have communicated the utmost smoothness to rhyme, but they have also tied it down to a harmonious uniformity. A foreigner, to whom antiquated and new are the same, may perhaps feel with greater freedom the advantages of the more ancient manner. Certain it is, the rhyme of the present day, from the too great confinement of the couplet, is unfit for the drama. We must not estimate the rhyme of Shakespeare by the mode of subsequent times, but by a comparison with his contemporaries or with Spenser. The comparison will, without doubt, turn out to his advantage. Spenser is often diffuse; Shakespeare, though sometimes hard, is always brief and vigorous. He has more frequently been induced by the rhyme to leave out something necessary than to insert anything superfluous. Many of his rhymes, however, are faultless: ingenious with attractive ease, and rich without false brilliancy. The songs interspersed (those, I mean, of the poet himself) are generally sweetly playful and altogether musical; in imagination, while we merely read them, we hear their melody.

The whole of Shakespeare's productions bear the certain stamp of his original genius, but yet no writer was ever further removed from everything like a mannerism derived from habit or personal peculiarities. Rather is he, such is the diversity of tone and color which vary according to the quality of his subjects he assumes, a very Proteus. Each of his compositions is like a world of its own, moving in its own sphere. They are works of art, finished in one pervading style, which revealed the freedom and judicious choice of their author. If the formation of a work throughout, even in its minutest parts, in conformity with a leading idea; if the domination of one animating spirit over all the means of execution, deserves the name of correctness (and this, excepting in matters of grammar, is the only proper sense of the term); we shall then, after allowing to Shakespeare all the higher qualities which demand our admiration, be also compelled, in most cases, to concede to him the title of a correct poet.

It would be in the highest degree instructive to follow, if we could, in his career step by step, an author who at once founded and carried his art to perfection, and to go through his works in the order of time. But, with the exception of a few fixed points, which at length have been obtained, all the necessary materials for this are still wanting. The diligent Malone has, indeed, made an attempt to arrange the plays of Shakespeare in chronological order; but he himself gives out only the result of his labors as hypothetical, and it could not possibly be attended with complete success, since he excluded from his inquiry a considerable number of pieces which have been ascribed to the poet, though rejected as spurious by all the editors since Rowe, but which, in my opinion, must, if not wholly, at least in great measure be attributed to him.

FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL

INTRODUCTION TO LUCINDA

By Calvin Thomas

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FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL'S *Lucinda*, published in 1799, was an explosion of youthful radicalism — a rather violent explosion which still reverberates in the histories of German Romanticism. It is a book about the metaphysics of love and marriage, the emancipation of the flesh, the ecstasies and follies of the enamored state, the nature and the rights of woman, and other such matters of which the world was destined to hear a great deal during the nineteenth century. Not by accident, but by intention, the little book was shocking, formless, incoherent — a riot of the ego without beginning, middle, or end. Now and then it passed the present limits of the printable in its exploitation of the improper and the unconventional.

Yet the book was by no means the wanton freak of a prurient imagination; it had a serious purpose and was believed by its author to present the essentials of a new and beautiful theory of life, art and religion. The great Schleiermacher, one of the profoundest of German theologians and an eloquent friend of religion, called *Lucinda* a "divine book" and its author a "priest of love and wisdom." "Everything in this work," he declared, "is at once human and divine; a magic air of divinity rises from its deep springs and permeates the whole temple." Today no man in his senses would praise the book in such terms. Yet, with all its crudities of style and its aberrations of taste, *Lucinda* reveals, not indeed the whole form and pressure of the epoch that gave it birth, but certain very interesting aspects of it. Then, too, it marks a curious

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FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL

stage in the development of the younger Schlegel, a really profound thinker and one of the notable men of his day. This explains why a considerable portion of the much discussed book is here presented for the first time in an English dress.

The earliest writings of Friedrich Schlegel — he was born in 1772 — relate to Greek literature, a field which he cultivated with enthusiasm and with ample learning. In particular he was interested in what his Greek poets and philosophers had to say of the position of women in society; of the *hetairai* as the equal and inspiring companions of men; of a more or less refined sexual love, untrammeled by law and convention, as the basis of a free, harmonious and beautiful existence. Among other things, he seems to have been much impressed by Plato's notion that the *genus homo* was one before it broke up into male and female, and that sexual attraction is a desire to restore the lost unity. In a very learned essay *On Diotima*, published in 1797 — Diotima is the woman of whose relation to Socrates we get a glimpse in Plato's *Symposium* — there is much that foreshadows *Lucinda.* Let two or three sentences suffice. "What is uglier than the overloaded femininity, what is more loathesome than the exaggerated masculinity, that rules in our customs, our opinions, and even in our better art?" "Precisely the tyrannical vehemence of the man, the flabby self-surrender of the woman, is in itself an ugly exaggeration." "Only the womanhood that is independent, only the manhood that is gentle, is good and beautiful."

In 1796 Friedrich Schlegel joined his brother at Jena, where Fichte was then expounding his philosophy. It was a system of radical idealism, teaching that the only reality is the absolute Ego, whose self-assertion thus becomes the fundamental law of the world. The Fichtean system had not yet been fully worked out in its metaphysical bearings, but the strong and engaging personality of its author gave it, for a little while, immense prestige and influence. To Friedrich Schlegel it seemed the gospel of a new era —

a sort of French Revolution in philosophy. Indeed he proclaimed that the three greatest events of the century were the French Revolution, Fichte's philosophy, and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister.* This last, which appeared in 1796 and contained obvious elements of autobiography, together with poems and disquisitions on this and that, was admired by him beyond all measure. He saw in it the exemplar and the program of a wonderful new art which he proposed to call "Romantic Poetry."

But gray theory would never have begotten *Lucinda.* Going to Berlin in 1797, Schlegel made the acquaintance of Dorothea Veit, daughter of Moses Mendelsohn and wife of a Berlin banker. She was nine years his senior. A strong attachment grew up between them, and presently the lady was persuaded to leave her husband and become the paramour of Schlegel. Even after the divorce was obtained Schlegel refused for some time to be married in church, believing that he had a sort of duty to perform in asserting the rights of passion over against social convention. For several years the pair lived in wild wedlock before they were regularly married. In 1808 they both joined the Catholic Church, and from that time on nothing more was heard of Friedrich Schlegel's radicalism. He came to hold opinions which were for the most part the exact opposite of those he had held in his youth. The vociferous friend of individual liberty became a reactionary champion of authority. Of course he grew ashamed of *Lucinda* and excluded it from his collected works.

Such was the soil in which the naughty book grew. It was an era of lax ideas regarding the marriage tie. Wilhelm Schlegel married a divorced woman who was destined in due time to transfer herself without legal formalities to Schelling. Goethe had set the example by his conscience marriage with Christiane Vulpius. It remains only to be said that the most of Friedrich Schlegel's intimates, including his brother Wilhelm, advised against the publication of *Lucinda.* But here, as in the matter of his marriage, the author felt that he had a duty to perform: it was necessary to declare independence of Mrs. Grundy's tyranny and shock people for their own good. But the reader of today will feel that the worst shortcomings of the book are not its immoralities, but its sins against art.

It will be observed that while *Lucinda* was called by its author a "novel," it hardly deserves that name. There is no story, no development of a plot. The book consists of disconnected glimpses in the form of letters, disquisitions, rhapsodies, conversations, etc., each with a more or less suggestive heading. Two of these sections — one cannot call them chapters — are omitted in the translation, namely, "Allegory of Impudence" and "Apprenticeship of Manhood."

LUCINDA (1799)

By Friedrich Schlegel

TRANSLATED BY PAUL BERNARD THOMAS

Prologue

SMILING with emotion Petrarch opens the collection of his immortal romanzas with a prefatory survey. The clever Boccaccio talks with flattering courtesy to all women, both at the beginning and at the end of his opulent book. The great Cervantes too, an old man in agony, but still genial and full of delicate wit, drapes the motley spectacle of his lifelike writings with the costly tapestry of a preface, which in itself is a beautiful and romantic painting.

Uproot a stately plant from its fertile, maternal soil, and there will still cling lovingly to it much that can seem superfluous only to a niggard.

But what shall my spirit bestow upon its offspring, which, like its parent, is as poor in poesy as it is rich in love?

Just one word, a parting trope: It is not alone the royal eagle who may despise the croaking of the raven; the swan, too, is proud and takes no note of it. Nothing concerns him except to keep clean the sheen of his white pinions. He thinks only of nestling against Leda's bosom without hurting her, and of breathing forth into song everything that is mortal within him.

THE CREATION

From the Painting by Moritz von Schwind

[illegible] ON F. BRUCKMANN A.-G., MUNICH

CONFESSIONS OF AN AWKWARD MAN

JULIUS TO LUCINDA

HUMAN beings and what they want and do, seemed to me, when I thought of it, like gray, motionless figures; but in the holy solitude all around me everything was light and color. A fresh, warm breath of life and love fanned me, rustling and stirring in all the branches of the verdant grove. I gazed and enjoyed it all, the rich green, the white blossoms and the golden fruit. And in my mind's eye I saw, too, in many forms, my one and only Beloved, now as a little girl, now as a young lady in the full bloom and energy of love and womanhood, and now as a dignified mother with her demure babe in her arms. I breathed the spring and I saw clearly all about me everlasting youth. Smiling I said to myself: " Even if this world is not the best and most useful of places, it is certainly the most beautiful."

From this feeling or thought nothing could have turned me, neither general despair nor personal fear. For I believed that the deep secrets of nature were being revealed to me; I felt that everything was immortal and that death was only a pleasant illusion. But I really did not think very much about it, since I was not particularly in a mood for mental synthesis and analysis. But I gladly lost myself in all those blendings and intertwinings of joy and pain from which spring the spice of life and the flower of feeling — spiritual pleasure as well as sensual bliss. A subtle fire flowed through my veins. What I dreamed was not of kissing you, not of holding you in my arms; it was not only the wish to relieve the tormenting sting of my desire, and to cool the sweet fire by gratification. It was not for your lips that I longed, or for your eyes, or for your body; no, it was a romantic confusion of all of these things, a marvelous mingling of memories and desires. All the mysteries of caprice in man and woman seemed to hover about me, when suddenly in my solitude your real presence and the glowing rapture in your face completely set me afire. Wit and ecstasy now began their alternating play, and were the common pulse of our united life. There was no less abandon than religion in our embrace. I besought you to yield to my frenzy and implored you to be insatiable. And yet with calm presence of mind I watched for the slightest sign of joy in you, so that not one should escape me to impair the harmony. I not only enjoyed, but I felt and enjoyed the enjoyment.

You are so extraordinarily clever, dearest Lucinda, that you have doubtless long ere this begun to suspect that this is all nothing but a beautiful dream. And so, alas, it is; and I should indeed feel very disconsolate about it if I could not cherish the hope that at least a part of it may soon be realized. The truth of the matter is this: Not long ago I was standing by the window—how long I do not know, for along with the other rules of reason and morality, I completely forgot about the lapse of time. Well, I was standing by the window and looking out into the open; the morning certainly deserves to be called beautiful, the air is still and quite warm, and the verdure here before me is fresh. And even as the wide land undulates in hills and dales, so the calm, broad, silvery river winds along in great bends and sweeps, until it and the lover's fantasy, cradled upon it like the swan, pass away into the distance and lose themselves in the immeasurable. My vision doubtless owes the grove and its southern color-effect to the huge mass of flowers here beside me, among which I see a large number of oranges. All the rest is readily explained by psychology. It was an illusion, dear friend, all an illusion, all except that, not long ago, I was standing by the window and doing nothing, and that I am now sitting here and doing something—something which is perhaps little more than nothing, perhaps even less.

I had written thus far to you about the things I had said to myself, when, in the midst of my tender thoughts and profound feelings about the dramatic connection of our embraces, a coarse and unpleasant occurrence interrupted me. I was just on the point of unfolding to you in clear and precise periods the exact and straightforward history of our frivolities and of my dulness. I was going to expound to you, step by step, in accordance with natural laws, the misunderstandings that attack the hidden centre of the loveliest existence, and to confess to you the manifold effects of my awkwardness. I was about to describe the apprenticeship of my manhood, a period which, taken as a whole or in parts, I can never look back upon without a great deal of inward amusement, a little melancholy, and considerable self-satisfaction. Still, as a refined lover and writer, I will endeavor to refashion the coarse occurrence and adapt it to my purpose. For me and for this book, however, for my love of it and for its inner development, there is no better adaptation of means to ends than this, namely, that right at the start I begin by abolishing what we call orderly arrangement, keep myself entirely aloof from it, frankly claiming and asserting the right to a charming confusion. This is all the more necessary, inasmuch as the material which our life and love offers to my spirit and to my pen is so incessantly progressive and so inflexibly systematic. If the form were also of that character, this, in its way, unique letter would then acquire an intolerable unity and monotony, and would no longer produce the desired effect, namely, to fashion and complete a most lovely chaos of sublime harmonies and interesting pleasures. So I use my incontestable right to a confused style by inserting here, in the wrong place, one of the many incoherent sheets which I once filled with rubbish, and which you, good creature, carefully preserved without my knowing it. It was written in a mood of impatient longing, due to my not finding you where I most surely expected to find you — in your room, on our sofa — in the haphazard words suggested by the pen you had lately been using.

The selection is not difficult. For since, among the dreamy fancies which are here confided to you in permanent letters, the recollection of this most beautiful world is the most significant, and has a certain sort of resemblance to what they call thought, I choose in preference to anything else a dithyrambic fantasy on the most lovely of situations. For once we know to a certainty that we live in a most beautiful world, the next need is obvious, namely, to inform ourselves fully, either through ourselves or through others, about the most lovely situation in this most beautiful world.

Dithyrambic Fantasy on the Loveliest of Situations

A big tear falls upon the holy sheet which I found here instead of you. How faithfully and how simply you have sketched it, the old and daring idea of my dearest and most intimate purpose! In you it has grown up, and in this mirror I do not shrink from loving and admiring myself. Only here I see myself in harmonious completeness. For your spirit, too, stands distinct and perfect before me, not as an apparition which appears and fades away again, but as one of the forms that endure forever. It looks at me joyously out of its deep eyes and opens its arms to embrace my spirit. The holiest and most evanescent of those delicate traits and utterances of the soul, which to one who does not know the highest seem like bliss itself, are merely the common atmosphere of our spiritual breath and life.

The words are weak and vague. Furthermore, in this throng of impressions I could only repeat anew the one inexhaustible feeling of our original harmony. A great future beckons me on into the immeasurable; each idea develops a countless progeny. The extremes of unbridled gayety and of quiet presentiment live together within me. I remember everything, even the griefs, and all my thoughts that have been and are to be bestir themselves and arise before me. The blood rushes wildly through my swollen veins, my mouth thirsts for the contact of your lips, and my fancy seeks vainly among the many forms of joy for one which might at last gratify my desire and give it rest. And then again I suddenly and sadly bethink me of the gloomy time when I was always waiting without hope, and madly loving without knowing it; when my innermost being overflowed with a vague longing, which it breathed forth but rarely in half-suppressed sighs.

Oh, I should have thought it all a fairy-tale that there could be such joy, such love as I now feel, and such a woman, who could be my most tender Beloved, my best companion, and at the same time a perfect friend. For it was in friendship especially that I sought for what I wanted, and for what I never hoped to find in any woman. In you I found it all, and more than I could wish for; but you are so unlike the rest. Of what custom or caprice calls womanly, you know nothing. The womanliness of your soul, aside from minor peculiarities, consists in its regarding life and love as the same thing. For you all feeling is infinite and eternal; you recognize no separations, your being is an indivisible unity. That is why you are so serious and so joyous, why you regard everything in such a large and indifferent way; that is why you love me, all of me, and will surrender no part of me to the state, to posterity, or to manly pleasures. I am all yours; we are closest to each other and we understand each other. You accompany me through all the stages of manhood, from the utmost wantonness to the most refined spirituality. In you alone I first saw true pride and true feminine humility.

The most extreme suffering, if it is only surrounded, without separating us, would seem to me nothing but a charming antithesis to the sublime frivolity of our marriage. Why should we not take the harshest whim of chance for an excellent jest and a most frolicsome caprice, since we, like our love, are immortal? I can no longer say *my* love and *your* love; they are both alike in their perfect mutuality. Marriage is the everlasting unity and alliance of our spirits, not only for what we call this world and that world, but for the one, true, indivisible, nameless, endless world of our entire being, so long as we live. Therefore, if it seemed the proper time, I would drain with you a cup of poison, just as gladly and just as easily as that last glass of champagne we drank together, when I said: "And so let us drink out the rest of our lives." With these words I hurriedly quaffed the wine, before its noble spirit ceased to sparkle. And so I say again, let us live and love. I know you would not wish to survive me; you would rather follow your dying husband into his coffin. Gladly and lovingly would you descend into the burning abyss, even as the women of India do, impelled by a mad law, the cruel, constraining purpose of which desecrates and destroys the most delicate sanctities of the will.

On the other side, perhaps, longing will be more completely realized. I often wonder over it; every thought, and whatever else is fashioned within us, seems to be complete in itself, as single and indivisible as a person. One thing crowds out another, and that which just now was near and present soon sinks back into obscurity. And then again come moments of sudden and universal clarity, when several such spirits of the inner world completely fuse together into a wonderful wedlock, and many a forgotten bit of our ego shines forth in a new light and even illuminates the darkness of the future with its bright lustre. As it is in a small way, so is it also, I think, in a large way. That which we call a life is for the complete, inner, immortal man only a single idea, an indivisible feeling. And for him there come, too, moments of the profoundest and fullest consciousness, when all lives fall together and mingle and separate in a different way. The time is coming when we two shall behold in one spirit that we are blossoms of one plant, or petals of one flower. We shall then know with a smile that what we now call merely hope was really memory.

Do you know how the first seed of this idea germinated in my soul before you and took root in yours? Thus does the religion of love weave our love ever and ever more closely and firmly together, just as a child, like an echo, doubles the happiness of its gentle parents.

Nothing can part us; and certainly any separation would only draw me more powerfully to you. I bethink me how at our last embrace, you vehemently resisting, I burst into simultaneous tears and laughter. I tried to calm myself, and in a sort of bewilderment I would not believe that I was separated from you until the surrounding objects convinced me of it against my will. But then my longing grew again irresistible, until on its wings I sank back into your arms. Suppose words or a human being to create a misunderstanding between us! The poignant grief would be transient and quickly resolve itself into complete harmony. How could separation separate us, when presence itself is to us, as it were, too present? We have to cool and mitigate the consuming fire with jests, and thus for us the most witty of the forms and situations of joy is also the most beautiful. One among all is at once the wittiest and the loveliest: when we exchange rôles and with childish delight try to see who can best imitate the other; whether you succeed best with the tender vehemence of a man, or I with the yielding devotion of a woman. But, do you know, this sweet game has for me quite other charms than its own. It is not merely the delight of exhaustion or the anticipation of revenge. I see in it a wonderful and profoundly significant allegory of the development of man and woman into complete humanity. * * *

That was my dithyrambic fantasy on the loveliest situation in the loveliest of worlds. I know right well what you thought of it and how you took it at that time. And I think I know just as well what you will think of it and how you will take it here, here in this little book, in which you expect to find genuine history, plain truth and calm reason; yes, even morality, the charming morality of love. "How can a man wish to write anything which it is scarcely permissible to talk about, which ought only to be felt?" I replied: "If a man feels it, he must wish to talk about it, and what a man wishes to talk about he may write."

I wanted first to demonstrate to you that there exists in the original and essential nature of man a certain awkward enthusiasm which likes to utter boldly that which is delicate and holy, and sometimes falls headlong over its own honest zeal and speaks a word that is divine to the point of coarseness.

This apology would indeed save me, but perhaps only at the enormous expense of my manhood itself; for whatever you may think of my manhood in particular, you have nevertheless a great deal against the sex in general. Meantime I will by no means make common cause with them, but will rather excuse and defend my liberty and audacity by means of the example of the little innocent Wilhelmina, since she too is a lady whom I love most tenderly. So I will straightway attempt a little sketch of her character.

Sketch of Little Wilhelmina

When one regards the remarkable child, not from the viewpoint of any one-sided theory, but, as is proper, in a large, impartial way, one can boldly say — and it is perhaps the best thing one could possibly say of her — that for her years she is the cleverest person of her time. And that is indeed saying a great deal; for how seldom do we find harmonious culture in people two years old? The strongest of the many strong proofs of her inward perfection is her serene self-complacency. After she has eaten she always spreads both her little arms out on the table, and resting her cunning head on them with amusing seriousness, she makes big eyes and casts cute glances at the family all around her. Then she straightens up and with the most vivid expression of irony on her face, smiles at her own cuteness and our inferiority. She is full of buffoonery and has a nice appreciation of it. When I imitate her gestures, she immediately copies my imitation; thus we have created a mimic language of our own and make each other understand by means of pantomime hieroglyphics.

For poetry, I think, she has far more inclination than for philosophy; so also she likes to ride better than to walk, which last she does only in case of necessity. The ugly cacophony of our mother-tongue here in the north melts on her tongue into the sweet and mellow euphony of Italian and Hindu speech. She is especially fond of rhymes, as of everything else that is beautiful; she never grows tired of saying and singing over and over again to herself, one after the other, all her favorite little verses — as it were, a classic selection of her little pleasures. Poetry binds the blossoms of all things together into a light garland, and so little Wilhelmina talks in rhyme about regions, times, events, persons, toys and things to eat — all mixed together in a romantic chaos, every word a picture. And she does all that without any qualifications or artistic transitions, which after all only aid the understanding and impede the free flight of the fancy.

For her fancy everything in nature is alive and animate. I often recall with pleasure the first time she ever saw and felt of a doll. She was not more than a year old. A divine smile lighted up her little face, as she pressed an affectionate kiss on the painted wooden lips. Surely there lies deep in the nature of man an impulse to eat anything he loves, to lift to his mouth every new object and there, if possible, reduce it to its original, constituent parts. A wholesome thirst for knowledge impels him to seize the object, penetrate into its interior and bite it to pieces. On the other hand, touching stops at the surface, while grasping affords only imperfect, mediate knowledge. Nevertheless it is a very interesting spectacle, when a bright child catches sight of another child, to watch her feel of it and strive to orient herself by means of those antennae of the reason. The strange baby creeps quietly away and hides himself, while the little philosopher follows him up and goes busily on with her manual investigation.

But, to be sure, mind, wit and originality are just as rare in children as in adults. All this, however, does not belong here, and is leading me beyond the bounds of my purpose. For this sketch proposes merely to portray an ideal, an ideal which I would ever keep before my eyes, so that in this little artistic volume of beautiful and elegant philosophy I may not wander away from the delicate line of propriety; and so that you will forgive me in advance for the audacious liberties that I am going to take, or at least you will be able to judge them from a higher viewpoint.

Am I wrong, think you, in seeking for morality in children — for delicacy and prettiness of thought and word?

Now look! Dear little Wilhelmina often finds inexpressible delight in lying on her back and kicking her little legs in the air, unconcerned about her clothes or about the judgment of the world. If Wilhelmina does that, what is there that I may not do, since I, by Heaven, am a man and under no obligation to be more modest than this most modest of all feminine creatures? Oh, enviable freedom from prejudice! Do you, too, dear friend, cast it from you, all the remnants of false modesty; just as I have often torn off your odious clothes and scattered them about in lovely anarchy. And if, perhaps, this little romance of my life should seem to you too wild, just think to yourself: He is only a child — and take his innocent wantonness with motherly forbearance and let him caress you.

If you will not be too particular about the plausibility and inner significance of an allegory, and are prepared for as much awkwardness in it as one might expect in the confessions of an awkward man, provided only that the costume is correct, I should like to relate to you here one of my waking dreams, inasmuch as it leads to the same result as my sketch of little Wilhelmina.*

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* Here follows, in the original, a so-called "Allegory of Impudence."— Translator's Note.

An Idyl of Idleness

"Behold, I am my own teacher, and a god hath planted all sorts of melodies in my soul." This I may boldly say, now that I am not talking about the joyous science of poetry, but about the godlike art of idleness. And with whom indeed should I rather talk and think about idleness than with myself. So I spoke also in that immortal hour when my guardian genius inspired me to preach the high gospel of true joy and love: "Oh, idleness, idleness! Thou art the very soul of innocence and inspiration. The blessed spirits do breathe thee, and blessed indeed is he who hath and cherisheth thee, thou sacred jewel, thou sole and only fragment of godlikeness brought forth by us from Paradise."

When I thus communed with myself I was sitting, like a pensive maiden in a thoughtless romance, by the side of a brook, watching the wavelets as they passed. They flowed by as smooth and quiet and sentimental as if Narcissus were about to see his reflection on the clear surface and become intoxicated with beautiful egoism. They might also have enticed me to lose myself deeper and deeper in the inner perspective of my mind, were not my nature so perpetually unselfish and practical that even my speculations never concern themselves about anything but the general good. So I fell to thinking, among other things, while my mind was relaxed by a comfortable laziness and my limbs by the powerful heat, of the possibility of a lasting embrace. I thought out ways of prolonging the time of our being together and of avoiding in the future those childishly pathetic expressions of pain over sudden parting, and of finding pleasure, as hitherto, in the comic side of Fate's inevitable and unchangeable decree that separate we must. And only after the power of my reason, laboring over the unattainableness of my ideal, broke and relaxed, did I give myself over to a stream of thoughts. I listened eagerly to all the motley fairy-tales with which imagination and desire, like irresistible sirens in my breast, charmed my senses. It did not occur to me to criticise the seductive illusion as ignoble, although I well knew that it was for the most part a beautiful lie. The soft music of the fantasy seemed to fill the gaps in my longing. I gratefully observed this and resolved to repeat for us in the future by my own inventiveness that which good fortune had given me, and to begin for you this poem of truth. And thus the original germ of this wonderful growth of caprice and love came into being. And just as freely as it sprouted did I intend it should grow up and run wild; and never from love of order and economy shall I trim off any of its profuse abundance of superfluous leaves and shoots.

Like a wise man of the East, I had fallen into a holy lethargy and calm contemplation of the everlasting substances, more especially of yours and mine. Greatness in repose, most people say, is the highest aim of plastic art. And so, without any distinct purpose and without any unseemly effort, I thought out and bodied forth our everlasting substances in this dignified style. I looked back and saw how gentle sleep overcame us in the midst of our embrace. Now and then one of us would open an eye, smile at the sweet slumber of the other, and wake up just enough to venture a jesting remark and a gentle caress. But ere the wanton play thus begun was ended, we would both sink back into the blissful lap of half-conscious self-forgetfulness.

With the greatest indignation I then thought of the bad men who would abolish sleep. They have probably never slept, and likewise never lived. Why are gods gods, except because they deliberately do nothing; because they understand that art and are masters of it? And how the poets, the sages and the saints strive to be like the gods, in that respect as in others! How they vie with one another in praise of solitude, of leisure, of liberal freedom from care and of inactivity! And they are right in doing so; for everything that is good and beautiful in life is already there and maintains itself by its own strength. Why then this vague striving and pushing forward without rest or goal? Can this storm and stress give form and nourishing juice to the everliving plant of humankind, that grows and fashions itself in quiet? This empty, restless activity is only a bad habit of the north and brings nothing but ennui for oneself and for others. And with what does it begin and end except with antipathy to the world in general, which is now such a common feeling? Inexperienced vanity does not suspect that it indicates only lack of reason and sense, but regards it as a high-minded discontent with the universal ugliness of the world and of life, of which it really has not yet the slightest presentiment. It could not be otherwise; for industry and utility are the death-angels which, with fiery swords, prevent the return of man into Paradise. Only when composed and at ease in the holy calm of true passivity can one think over his entire being and get a view of life and the world.

How is it that we think and compose at all, except by surrendering ourselves completely to the influence of some genius? Speaking and fashioning are after all only incidentals in all arts and sciences; thinking and imagining are the essentials, and they are only possible in a passive state. To be sure it is intentional, arbitrary, one-sided, but still a passive state. The more beautiful the climate we live in, the more passive we are. Only the Italians know what it is to walk, and only the Orientals to recline. And where do we find the human spirit more delicately and sweetly developed than in India? Everywhere it is the privilege of being idle that distinguishes the noble from the common; it is the true principle of nobility. Finally, where is the greater and more lasting enjoyment, the greater power and will to enjoy? Among women, whose nature we call passive, or among men, in whom the transition from sudden wrath to ennui is quicker than that from good to evil?

Satisfied with the enjoyment of my existence, I proposed to raise myself above all its finite, and therefore contemptible, aims and objects. Nature itself seemed to confirm me in this undertaking, and, as it were, to exhort me in many-voiced choral songs to further idleness. And now suddenly a new vision presented itself. I imagined myself invisible in a theatre. On one side I saw all the well-known boards, lights and painted scenery; on the other a vast throng of spectators, a veritable ocean of curious faces and sympathetic eyes. In the foreground, on the right, was Prometheus, in the act of fashioning men. He was bound by a long chain and was working very fast and very hard. Beside him stood several monstrous fellows who were constantly whipping and goading him on. There was also an abundance of glue and other materials about, and he was getting fire out of a large coal-pan. On the other side was a figure of the deified Hercules, with Hebe in his lap. On the stage in the foreground a crowd of youthful forms were laughing and running about, all of whom were very happy and did not merely seem to live. The youngest looked like amorettes, the older ones like images of women. But each one of them had his own peculiar manner and a striking originality of expression; and they all bore a certain resemblance to the Christian painters' and poets' idea of the devil — one might have called them little Satans. One of the smallest said:

"He who does not despise, cannot respect; one can only do either boundlessly, and good tone consists only in playing with men. And so is not a certain amount of malice an essential part of harmonious culture?"

"Nothing is more absurd," said another, "than when the moralists reproach you about your egoism. They are altogether wrong; for what god, who is not his own god, can deserve respect from man? You are, to be sure, mistaken in thinking that you have an ego; but if, in the meantime, you identify it with your body, your name and your property, you thereby at least make ready a place for it, in case by any chance an ego should come."

"And this Prometheus you can all hold in deep reverence," said one of the tallest. "He has made you all and is constantly making more like you."

And in fact just as soon as each new man was finished, the devils put him down with all the rest who were looking on, and immediately it was impossible to distinguish him from the others, so much alike were they all.

" The mistake he makes is in his method," continued the Sataniscus. " How can one want to do nothing but fashion men? Those are not the right tools he has."

And thereat he pointed to a rough figure of the God of the Gardens, which stood in the back part of the stage between an Amor and a very beautiful naked Venus.

" In regard to that our friend Hercules had better views, who could occupy fifty maidens in a single night for the welfare of humanity, and all of them heroic maids too. He did those labors of his, too, and slew many a furious monster. But the goal of his career was always a noble leisure, and for that reason he has gained entrance to Olympus. Not so, however, with this Prometheus, the inventor of education and enlightenment. To him you owe it that you can never be quiet and are always on the move. Hence it is also, when you have absolutely nothing to do, that you foolishly aspire to develop character and observe and study one another. It is a vile business. But Prometheus, for having misled man to toil, now has to toil himself, whether he wants to or not. He will soon get very tired of it, and never again will he be freed from his chains."

When the spectators heard this, they broke out into tears and jumped upon the stage to assure their father of their heartfelt sympathy. And thus the allegorical comedy vanished.

Constancy and Play

" Of course you are alone, Lucinda? "

" I do not know — perhaps — I think —"

" Please! please! dear Lucinda. You know very well that when little Wilhelmina says ' please! please! ' and you do not do at once what she wants, she cries louder and louder until she gets her way."

"So it was to tell me that that you rushed into my room so out of breath and frightened me so?"

"Do not be angry with me, sweet lady, I beg of you! Oh, my child! Lovely creature! Be a good girl and do not reproach me!"

"Well, I suppose you will soon be asking me to close the door?"

"So? I will answer that directly. But first a nice long kiss, and then another, and then some more, and after that more still."

"Oh! You must not kiss me that way — if you want me to keep my senses! It makes one think bad thoughts."

"You deserve to. Are you really capable of laughing, my peevish lady? Who would have thought so? But I know very well you laugh only because you can laugh at me. You do not do it from pleasure. For who ever looked so solemn as you did just now — like a Roman senator? And you might have looked ravishing, dear child, with those holy dark eyes, and your long black hair shining in the evening sunlight — if you had not sat there like a judge on the bench. Heavens! I actually started back when I saw how you were looking at me. A little more and I should have forgotten the most important thing, and I am all confused. But why do you not talk? Am I disagreeable to you?"

"Well, that *is* funny, you surly Julius. As if you ever let any one say anything! Your tenderness flows today like a spring shower."

"Like your talk in the night."

"Oh sir, let my neckcloth be."

"Let it be? Not a bit of it! What is the use of a miserable, stupid neckcloth? Prejudice! Away with it!"

"If only no one disturbs us!"

"There she goes again, looking as if she wanted to cry! You are well, are you not? What makes your heart beat so? Come, let me kiss it! Oh, yes, you spoke a moment ago about closing the door. Very well, but not that way, not here. Come, let us run down through the garden to the summer-house, where the flowers are. Come! Oh, do not make me wait so!"

"As you wish, sir."

"I cannot understand—you are so odd today."

"Now, my dear friend, if you are going to begin moralizing, we might just as well go back again. I prefer to give you just one more kiss and run on ahead of you."

"Oh, not so fast, Lucinda! My moralizing will not overtake you. You will fall, love!"

"I did not wish to make you wait any longer. Now we are here. And you came pretty fast yourself."

"And you are very obedient! But this is no time to quarrel."

"Be still! Be still!"

"See! Here is a soft, cosy place, with everything as it should be. This time, if you do not—well, there will be no excuse for you."

"Will you not at least lower the curtain first?"

"You are right. The light will be much more charming so. How beautiful your skin shines in the red light! Why are you so cold, Lucinda?"

"Dearest, put the hyacinths further away, their odor sickens me."

"How solid and firm, how soft and smooth! That is harmonious development."

"Oh no, Julius! Please don't! I beg of you! I will not allow it!"

"May I not feel * * *. Oh, let me listen to the beating of your heart! Let me cool my lips in the snow of your bosom! Do not push me away! I will have my revenge! Hold me tighter! Kiss upon kiss! No, not a lot of short ones! One everlasting one! Take my whole soul and give me yours! Oh, beautiful and glorious Together! Are we not children? Tell me! How could you be so cold and indifferent at first, and then afterward draw me closer to you, making a face the while as if something were hurting you, as if you were reluctant to return my ardor? What is the matter? Are you crying? Do not hide your face! Look at me, dearest!"

"Oh, let me lie here beside you—I cannot look into your eyes. It was very naughty of me, Julius! Can you ever forgive me, darling? You will not desert me, will you? Can you still love me?"

"Come to me, sweet lady—here, close to my heart. Do you remember how nice it was, not long ago, when you cried in my arms, and how it relieved you? Tell me what the matter is now. You are not angry with me?"

"I am angry with myself. I could beat myself! To be sure, it would have served you right. And if ever again, sir, you conduct yourself so like a husband, I shall take better care that you find me like a wife. You may be assured of that. I cannot help laughing, it took me so by surprise. But do not imagine, sir, that you are so terribly lovable—this time it was by my own will that I broke my resolution."

"The first will and the last is always the best. It is just because women usually say less than they mean that they sometimes do more than they intend. That is no more than right; good will leads you women astray. Good will is a very nice thing, but the bad part of it is that it is always there, even when you do not want it."

"That is a beautiful mistake. But you men are full of bad will and you persist in it."

"Oh no! If we seem to be obstinate, it is only because we cannot be otherwise, not because our will is bad. We cannot, because we do not will properly. Hence it is not bad will, but lack of will. And to whom is the fault attributable but to you women, who have such a superabundance of good will and keep it all to yourselves, unwilling to share it with us. But it happened quite against my will that we fell a-talking about will—I am sure I do not know why we are doing it. Still, it is much better for me to vent my feelings by talking than by smashing the beautiful chinaware. It gave me a chance to recover from my astonishment over your unexpected compunction, your excellent discourse, and your laudable resolution. Really, this is one of the strangest pranks that you have ever given me the honor of witnessing; so far as I can remember, it has been several weeks since you have talked by daylight in such solemn and unctuous periods as you used in your little sermon today. Would you mind translating your meaning into prose?"

"Really, have you forgotten already about yesterday evening and the interesting company? Of course I did not know that."

"Oh! And so that is why you are so out of sorts—because I talked with Amalia too much?"

"Talk as much as you please with anybody you please. But you must be nice to me—that I insist on."

"You spoke so very loud; the stranger was standing close by, and I was nervous and did not know what else to do."

"Except to be rude in your awkwardness."

"Forgive me! I plead guilty. You know how embarrassed I am with you in society. It always hurts me to talk with you in the presence of others."

"How nicely he manages to excuse himself!"

"The next time do not pass it over! Look out and be strict with me. But see what you have done! Isn't it a desecration? Oh no! It isn't possible, it is more than that. You will have to confess it—you were jealous."

"All the evening you rudely forgot about me. I began to write it all out for you today, but tore it up."

"And then, when I came?"

"Your being in such an awful hurry annoyed me."

"Could you love me if I were not so inflammable and electric? Are you not so too? Have you forgotten our first embrace? In one minute love comes and lasts forever, or it does not come at all. Or do you think that joy is accumulated like money and other material things, by consistent behavior? Great happiness is like music coming out of the air—it appears and surprises us and then vanishes again."

"And thus it was you appeared to me, darling! But you will not vanish, will you? You shall not! I say it!"

"I will not, I will stay with you now and for all time. Listen! I feel a strong desire to hold a long discourse with you on jealousy. But first we ought to conciliate the offended gods."

"Rather, first the discourse and afterward the gods."

"You are right, we are not yet worthy of them. It takes you a long time to get over it after you have been disturbed and annoyed about something. How nice it is that you are so sensitive!"

"I am no more sensitive than you are—only in a different way."

"Well then, tell me! I am not jealous—how does it happen that you are?"

"Am I, unless I have cause to be? Answer me that!"

"I do not know what you mean."

"Well, I am not really jealous. But tell me: What were you talking about all yesterday evening?"

"So? It is Amalia of whom you are jealous? Is it possible? That nonsense? I did not talk about anything with her, and that was the funny part of it. Did I not talk just as long with Antonio, whom a short time ago I used to see almost every day?"

"You want me to believe that you talk in the same way with the coquettish Amalia that you do with the quiet, serious Antonio. Of course! It is nothing more than a case of clear, pure friendship!"

"Oh no, you must not believe that—I do not wish you to. That is not true. How can you credit me with being so foolish? For it is a very foolish thing indeed for two people of opposite sex to form and conceive any such relation as pure friendship. In Amalia's case it is nothing more than playing that I love her. I should not care anything about her at all, if she were not a little coquettish.

Would that there were more like her in our circle! Just in fun, one must really love all the ladies."

"Julius, I believe you are going completely crazy!"

"Now understand me aright — I do not really mean *all* of them, but all of them who are lovable and happen to come one's way."

"That is nothing more than what the French call *galanterie* and *coquetterie.*"

"Nothing more — except that I think of it as something beautiful and clever. And then men ought to know what the ladies are doing and what they want; and that is rarely the case. A fine pleasantry is apt to be transformed in their hands into coarse seriousness."

"This loving just in fun is not at all a funny thing to look at."

"That is not the fault of the fun — it is just miserable jealousy. Forgive me, dearest — I do not wish to get excited, but I must confess that I cannot understand how any one can be jealous. For lovers do not offend each other, but do things to please each other. Hence it must come from uncertainty, absence of love, and unfaithfulness to oneself. For me happiness is assured, and love is one with constancy. To be sure, it is a different matter with people who love in the ordinary way. The man loves only the race in his wife, the woman in her husband only the degree of his ability and social position, and both love in their children only their creation and their property. Under those circumstances fidelity comes to be a merit, a virtue, and jealousy is in order. For they are quite right in tacitly believing that there are many like themselves, and that one man is about as good as the next, and none of them worth very much."

"You look upon jealousy, then, as nothing but empty vulgarity and lack of culture."

"Yes, or rather as mis-culture and perversity, which is just as bad or still worse. According to that system the best thing for a man to do is to marry of set purpose out of sheer obligingness and courtesy. And certainly for such folk it must be no less convenient than entertaining, to live out their lives together in a state of mutual contempt. Women especially are capable of acquiring a genuine passion for marriage; and when one of them finds it to her liking, it easily happens that she marries half a dozen in succession, either spiritually or bodily. And the opportunity is never wanting for a man and wife to be delicate for a change, and talk a great deal about friendship."

"You used to talk as if you regarded us women as incapable of friendship. Is that really your opinion?"

"Yes, but the incapability, I think, lies more in the friendship than in you. Whatever you love at all, you love indivisibly; for instance, a sweetheart or a baby. With you even a sisterly relation would assume this character."

"You are right there."

"For you friendship is too many-sided and one-sided. It has to be absolutely spiritual and have definite, fixed bounds. This boundedness would, only in a more refined way, be just as fatal to your character as would sheer sensuality without love. For society, on the other hand, it is too serious, too profound, too holy."

"Cannot people, then, talk with each other regardless of whether they are men or women?"

"That might make society rather serious. At best, it might form an interesting club. You understand what I mean: it would be a great gain, if people could talk freely, and were neither too wild nor yet too stiff. The finest and best part would always be lacking — that which is everywhere the spirit and soul of good society — namely, that playing with love and that love of play which, without the finer sense, easily degenerates into jocosity. And for that reason I defend the ambiguities too."

"Do you do that in play or by way of joke?"

"No! No! I do it in all seriousness."

"But surely not as seriously and solemnly as Pauline and her lover?"

"Heaven forbid! I really believe they would ring the church-bell when they embrace each other, if it were only proper. Oh, it is true, my friend, man is naturally a serious animal. We must work against this shameful and abominable propensity with all our strength, and attack it from all sides. To that end ambiguities are also good, except that they are so seldom ambiguous. When they are not and allow only one interpretation, that is not immoral, it is only obtrusive and vulgar. Frivolous talk must be spiritual and dainty and modest, so far as possible; for the rest as wicked as you choose."

"That is well enough, but what place have your ambiguities in society?"

"To keep the conversations fresh, just as salt keeps food fresh. The question is not *why* we say them, but *how* we say them. It would be rude indeed to talk with a charming lady as if she were a sexless Amphibium. It is a duty and an obligation to allude constantly to what she is and is going to be. It is really a comical situation, considering how indelicate, stiff and guilty society is, to be an innocent girl."

"That reminds me of the famous Buffo, who, while he was always making others laugh, was so sad and solemn himself."

"Society is a chaos which can be brought into harmonious order only by wit. If one does not jest and toy with the elements of passion, it forms thick masses and darkens everything."

"Then there must be passion in the air here, for it is almost dark."

"Surely you have closed your eyes, lady of my heart! Otherwise the light in them would brighten the whole room."

"I wonder, Julius, who is the more passionate, you or I?"

"Both of us are passionate enough. If that were not so, I should not want to live. And see! That is why I could reconcile myself to jealousy. There is everything in love

—friendship, pleasant intercourse, sensuality, and even passion. Everything must be in it, and one thing must strengthen, mitigate, enliven and elevate the other."

"Let me embrace you, darling."

"But only on one condition can I allow you to be jealous. I have often felt that a little bit of cultured and refined anger does not ill-become a man. Perhaps it is the same way with you in regard to jealousy."

"Agreed! Then I do not have to abjure it altogether."

"If only you always manifest it as prettily and as wittily as you did today."

"Did I? Well, if next time you get into so pretty and witty a passion about it, I shall say so and praise you for it."

"Are we not worthy now to conciliate the offended gods?"

"Yes, if your discourse is entirely finished; otherwise give me the rest."*

METAMORPHOSES

THE childlike spirit slumbers in sweet repose, and the kiss of the loving goddess arouses in him only light dreams. The rose of shame tinges his cheek; he smiles and seems to open his lips, but he does not awaken and he knows not what is going on within him. Not until after the charm of the external world, multiplied and reinforced by an inner echo, has completely permeated his entire being, does he open his eyes, reveling in the sun, and recall to mind the magic world which he saw in the gleam of the pale moonlight. The wondrous voice that awakened him is still audible, but instead of answering him it echoes back from external objects. And if in childish timidity he tries to escape from the mystery of his existence, seeking the unknown with beautiful curiosity, he hears everywhere only the echo of his own longing.

Thus the eye sees in the mirror of the river only the reflection of the blue sky, the green banks, the waving trees, and the form of the absorbed gazer. When a heart, full of unconscious love, finds itself where it hoped to find love in return, it is struck with amazement. But we soon allow ourselves to be lured and deceived by the charm of the view into loving our own reflection. Then has the moment of winsomeness come, the soul fashions its envelop again, and breathes the final breath of perfection through form. The spirit loses itself in its clear depth and finds itself again, like Narcissus, as a flower.

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* Here follows in the original a biographic sketch called "Apprenticeship of Manhood."—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

Love is higher than winsomeness, and how soon would the flower of Beauty wither without the complementary birth of requited love. This moment the kiss of Amor and Psyche is the rose of life. The inspired Diotima revealed to Socrates only a half of love. Love is not merely a quiet longing for the infinite; it is also the holy enjoyment of a beautiful present. It is not merely a mixture, a transition from the mortal to the immortal, but it is a complete union of both. There is a pure love, an indivisible and simple feeling, without the slightest interference of restless striving. Every one gives the same as he takes, one just like the other, all is balanced and completed in itself, like the everlasting kiss of the divine children.

By the magic of joy the grand chaos of struggling forms dissolves into a harmonious sea of oblivion. When the ray of happiness breaks in the last tear of longing, Iris is already adorning the eternal brow of heaven with the delicate tints of her many-colored rainbow. Sweet dreams come true, and the pure forms of a new generation rise up out of Lethe's waves, beautiful as Anadyomene, and exhibit their limbs in the place of the vanished darkness. In golden youth and innocence time and man change in the divine peace of nature, and evermore Aurora comes back more beautiful than before.

Not hate, as the wise say, but love, separates people and fashions the world; and only in its light can we find this and observe it. Only in the answer of its Thou can every

I completely feel its endless unity. Then the understanding tries to unfold the inner germ of godlikeness, presses closer and closer to the goal, is full of eagerness to fashion the soul, as an artist fashions his one beloved masterpiece. In the mysteries of culture the spirit sees the play and the laws of caprice and of life. The statue of Pygmalion moves; a joyous shudder comes over the astonished artist in the consciousness of his own immortality, and, as the eagle bore Ganymede, a divine hope bears him on its mighty pinion up to Olympus.

TWO LETTERS

I

Is it then really and truly so, what I have so often quietly wished for and have never dared to express? I see the light of holy joy beaming on your face, and you modestly give me the beautiful promise. You are to be a mother!

Farewell, Longing, and thou, gentle Grief, farewell; the world is beautiful again. Now I love the earth, and the rosy dawn of a new spring lifts its radiant head over my immortal existence. If I had some laurel, I would bind it around your brow to consecrate you to new and serious duties; for there begins now for you another life. Therefore, give to me the wreath of myrtle. It befits me to adorn myself with the symbol of youthful innocence, since I now wander in Nature's Paradise. Hitherto all that held us together was love and passion. Now Nature has united us more firmly with an indissoluble bond. Nature is the only true priestess of joy; she alone knows how to tie the nuptial knot, not with empty words that bring no blessing, but with fresh blossoms and living fruits from the fullness of her power. In the endless succession of new forms creating Time plaits the wreath of Eternity, and blessed is he whom Fortune selects to be healthy and bear fruit. We are not sterile flowers among other living beings;

the gods do not wish to exclude us from the great concatenation of living things, and are giving us plain tokens of their will.

So let us deserve our position in this beautiful world, let us bear the immortal fruits which the spirit chooses to create, and let us take our place in the ranks of humanity. I will establish myself on the earth, I will sow and reap for the future as well as for the present. I will utilize all my strength during the day, and in the evening I will refresh myself in the arms of the mother, who will be eternally my bride. Our son, the demure little rogue, will play around us, and help me invent mischief at your expense.

You are right; we must certainly buy the little estate. I am glad that you went right ahead with the arrangements, without waiting for my decision. Order everything just as you please; but, if I may say so, do not have it too beautiful, nor yet too useful, and, above all things, not too elaborate.

If you only arrange it all in accordance with your own judgment and do not allow yourself to be talked into the proper and conventional, everything will be quite right, and the way I want it to be; and I shall derive immense enjoyment from the beautiful property. Hitherto I have lived in a thoughtless way and without any feeling of ownership; I have tripped lightly over the earth and have never felt at home on it. Now the sanctuary of marriage has given me the rights of citizenship in the state of nature. I am no longer suspended in the empty void of general inspiration; I like the friendly restraint, I see the useful in a new light, and find everything truly useful that unites everlasting love with its object — in short everything that serves to bring about a genuine marriage. External things imbue me with profound respect, if, in their way, they are good for something; and you will some day hear me enthusiastically praise the blessedness of home and the merits of domesticity.

I understand now your preference for country life, I like you for it and feel as you do about it. I can no longer endure to see these ungainly masses of everything that is corrupt and diseased in mankind; and when I think about them in a general way they seem to me like wild animals bound by a chain, so that they cannot even vent their rage freely. In the country, people can live side by side without offensively crowding one another. If everything were as it ought to be, beautiful mansions and cosy cottages would there adorn the green earth, as do the fresh shrubs and flowers, and create a garden worthy of the gods.

To be sure we shall find in the country the vulgarity that prevails everywhere. There ought really to be only two social classes, the culturing and the cultured, the masculine and the feminine; instead of all artificial society, there should be a grand marriage of these two classes and universal brotherhood of all individuals. In place of that we see a vast amount of coarseness and, as an insignificant exception, a few who are perverted by a wrong education. But in the open air the one thing which is beautiful and good cannot be suppressed by the bad masses and their show of omnipotence.

Do you know what period of our love seems to me particularly beautiful? To be sure, it is all beautiful and pure in my memory, and I even think of the first days with a sort of melancholy delight. But to me the most cherished period of all is the last few days, when we were living together on the estate. Another reason for living again in the country.

One thing more. Do not have the grapevines trimmed too close. I say this only because you thought they were growing too fast and luxuriantly, and because it might occur to you to want a perfectly clear view of the house on all sides. Also the green grass-plot must stay as it is; that is where the baby is to crawl and play and roll about.

Is it not true that the pain my sad letter caused you is now entirely compensated? In the midst of all these giddy joys and hopes I can no longer torment myself with care. You yourself suffered no greater pain from it than I. But what does that matter, if you love me, really love me in your very heart, without any reservation of alien thought? What pain were worth mentioning when we gain by it a deeper and more fervid consciousness of our love? And so, I am sure, you feel about it too. Everything I am telling you, you knew long ago. There is absolutely no delight, no love in me, the cause of which does not lie concealed somewhere in the depths of your being, you everlastingly blessed creature!

Misunderstandings are sometimes good, in that they lead us to talk of what is holiest. The differences that now and then seem to arise are not in us, not in either of us; they are merely between us and on the surface, and I hope you will take this occasion to drive them off and away from you.

And what is the cause of such little repulsions except our mutual and insatiable desire to love and be loved? And without this insatiableness there is no love. We live and love to annihilation. And if it is love that first develops us into true and perfect beings, that is the very life of life, then it need not fear opposition any more than it fears life itself or humanity; peace will come to it only after the conflict of forces.

I feel happy indeed that I love a woman who is capable of loving as you do. "As you do" is a stronger expression than any superlative. How can you praise my words, when I, without wishing to, hit upon some that hurt you? I should like to say, I write too well to be able to describe to you my inward state of mind. Oh, dearest! Believe me, there is no question in you that has not its answer in me. Your love cannot be any more everlasting than mine. Admirable, however, is your beautiful jealousy of my fancy and its wild flights. That indicates rightly the boundlessness of your constancy, and leads me to hope that your jealousy is on the point of destroying itself by its own excess.

This sort of fancy — committed to writing — is no longer needed. I shall soon be with you. I am holier and more composed than I was. I can only see you in my mind and stand always before you. You yourself feel everything without my telling you, and beam with joy, thinking partly of the man you love and partly of your baby.

Do you know, while I have been writing to you, no memory could have profaned you; to me you are as everlastingly pure as the Holy Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, and you have wanted nothing to make you like the Madonna except the Child. Now you have that, now it is there and a reality. I shall soon be carrying him on my arm, telling him fairy-tales, giving him serious instruction and lessons as to how a young man has to conduct himself in the world.

And then my mind reverts to the mother. I give you an endless kiss; I watch your bosom heave with longing, and feel the mysterious throbbing of your heart. When we are together again we will think of our youth, and I will keep the present holy. You are right indeed; one hour later is infinitely later.

It is cruel that I cannot be with you right now. From sheer impatience I do all sorts of foolish things. From morning until night I do nothing but rove around here in this glorious region. Sometimes I hasten my steps, as if I had something terribly important to do, and presently find myself in some place where I had not the least desire to be. I make gestures as if I were delivering a forcible speech; I think I am alone and suddenly find myself among people. Then I have to smile when I realize how absent-minded I was.

I cannot write very long either; pretty soon I want to go out again and dream away the beautiful evening on the bank of the quiet stream.

Today I forgot among other things that it was time to send my letter off. Oh well, so much the more joy and excitement will you have when you receive it.

* * *

People are really very good to me. They not only forgive me for not taking any part in their conversation, but also for capriciously interrupting it. In a quiet way they seem even to derive hearty pleasure from my joy. Especially Juliana. I tell her very little about you, but she has a good intuition and surmises the rest. Certainly there is nothing more amiable than pure, unselfish delight in love.

I really believe that I should love my friends here, even if they were less admirable than they are. I feel a great change in my being, a general tenderness and sweet warmth in all the powers of my soul and spirit, like the beautiful exhaustion of the senses that follows the highest life. And yet it is anything but weakness. On the contrary, I know that from now on I shall be able to do everything pertaining to my vocation with more liking and with fresher vigor. I have never felt more confidence and courage to work as a man among men, to lead a heroic life, and in joyous fraternal coöperation to act for eternity.

That is my virtue; thus it becomes me to be like the gods. Yours is gently to reveal, like Nature's priestess of joy, the mystery of love; and, surrounded by worthy sons and daughters, to hallow this beautiful life into a holy festival.

* * *

I often worry about your health. You dress yourself too lightly and are fond of the evening air; those are dangerous habits and are not the only ones which you must break. Remember that a new order of things is beginning for you. Hitherto I have praised your frivolity, because it was opportune and in keeping with the rest of your nature. I thought it feminine for you to play with Fortune, to flout caution, to destroy whole masses of your life and environment. Now, however, there is something that you must always bear in mind, and regard above everything else. You must gradually train yourself — in the allegorical sense, of course.

In this letter everything is all mixed up in a motley confusion, just as praying and eating and rascality and ecstasy are mixed up in life. Well, good night. Oh, why is it that I cannot at least be with you in my dreams — be really with you and dream in you. For when I merely dream of you, I am always alone. You wonder why you do not dream of me, since you think of me so much. Dearest, do you not also have your long spells of silence about me?

Amalia's letter gave me great pleasure. To be sure, I see from its flattering tone that she does not consider me as an exception to the men who need flattery. I do not like that at all. It would not be fair to ask her to recognize my worth in our way. It is enough that there is one who understands me. In her way she appreciates my worth so beautifully. I wonder if she knows what adoration is? I doubt it, and am sorry for her if she does not. Aren't you?

Today in a French book about two lovers I came across the expression: "They were the universe to each other." It struck me as at once pathetic and comical, how that thoughtless phrase, put there merely as a hyperbolical figure of speech, in our case was so literally true. Still it is also literally true for a French passion of that kind. They are the universe to each other, because they lose sense for everything else. Not so with us. Everything we once loved we still love all the more ardently. The world's meaning has now dawned upon us. Through me you have learned to know the infinitude of the human mind, and through you I have come to understand marriage and life, and the gloriousness of all things.

Everything is animate for me, speaks to me, and everything is holy. When people love each other as we do, human nature reverts to its original godliness. The pleasure of the lover's embrace becomes again — what it is in general — the holiest marvel of Nature. And that which for others is only something to be rightly ashamed of, becomes for us, what in and of itself it is, the pure fire of the noblest potency of life.

There are three things which our child shall certainly have — a great deal of wanton spirit, a serious face, and a certain amount of predisposition for art. Everything else I await with quiet resignation. Son or daughter, as for that I have no special preference. But about the child's bringing-up I have thought a great, great deal. We must carefully avoid, I think, what is called "education;" try harder to avoid it than, say, three sensible fathers try, by anxious thought, to lace up their progeny from the very cradle in the bands of narrow morality.

I have made some plans which I think will please you. In doing so I have carefully considered your ideas. But you must not neglect the Art! For your daughter, if it should be a daughter, would you prefer portrait- or landscape-painting?

You foolish girl, with your external things! You want to know what is going on around me, and where and when and how I live and amuse myself? Just look around you, on the chair beside you, in your arms, close to your heart — that is where I am. Does not a ray of longing strike you, creep up with sweet warmth to your heart, until it reaches your mouth, where it would fain overflow in kisses?

And now you actually boast because you write me such warm letters, while I only write to you often, you pedantic creature. At first I always think of you as you describe it — that I am walking with you, looking at you, listening to you, talking with you. Then again it is sometimes quite different, especially when I wake up at night.

How can you have any doubt about the worthiness and divineness of your letters? The last one sparkles and beams as if it had bright eyes. It is not mere writing — it is music. I believe that if I were to stay away from you a few more months, your style would become absolutely perfect. Meanwhile I think it advisable for us to forget about writing and style, and no longer to postpone the highest and loveliest of studies. I have practically decided to set out in eight days.

II

It is a remarkable thing that man does not stand in great awe of himself. The children are justified, when they peep so curiously and timidly at a company of unknown faces. Each individual atom of everlasting time is capable of comprising a world of joy, and at the same time of opening up a fathomless abyss of pain and suffering. I understand now the old fairy-tale about the man whom the sorcerer allowed to live a great many years in a few moments. For I know by my own experience the terrible omnipotence of the fantasy.

Since the last letter from your sister — it is three days now — I have undergone the sufferings of an entire life, from the bright sunlight of glowing youth to the pale moonlight of sagacious old age. Every little detail she wrote about your sickness, taken with what I had already gleaned from the doctor and had observed myself, confirmed my suspicion that it was far more dangerous than you thought; indeed no longer dangerous, but decided, past hope. Lost in this thought and my strength entirely exhausted on account of the impossibility of hurrying to your side, my state of mind was really very disconsolate. Now for the first time I understand what it really was, being new-born by the joyful news that you are well again. For you are well again now, as good as entirely well — that I infer from all the reports, with the same confidence with which a few days ago I pronounced our death-sentence.

I did not think of it as about to happen in the future, or even in the present. Everything was already past. For a long time you had been wrapt in the bosom of the cold earth; flowers had started to grow on the beloved grave, and my tears had already begun to flow more gently. Mute and alone I stood, and saw nothing but the features I had loved and the sweet glances of the expressive eyes. The picture remained motionless before me; now and then the pale face smiled and seemed asleep, just as it had looked the last time I saw it. Then of a sudden the different memories all became confused; with unbelievable rapidity the outlines changed, reassumed their first form, and transformed themselves again and again, until the wild vision vanished. Only your holy eyes remained in the empty space and hung there motionless, even as the friendly stars shine eternally over our poverty. I gazed fixedly at the black lights, which shone with a well-known smile in the night of my grief. Now a piercing pain from dark suns burned me with an insupportable glare, now a beautiful radiance hovered about as if to entice me. Then I seemed to feel a fresh breath of morning air fan me; I held my head up and cried aloud: "Why should you torment yourself? In a few minutes you can be with her!"

I was already hastening to you, when suddenly a new thought held me back and I said to my spirit: "Unworthy man, you cannot even endure the trifling dissonances of this ordinary life, and yet you regard yourself as ready for and worthy of a higher life? Go away and do and suffer as your calling is, and then present yourself again when your orders have been executed."

Is it not to you also remarkable how everything on this earth moves toward the centre, how orderly everything is, how insignificant and trivial? So it has always seemed to me. And for that reason I suspect — if I am not mistaken, I have already imparted my suspicion to you — that the next life will be larger, and in the good as well as in the bad, stronger, wilder, bolder and more tremendous.

The duty of living had conquered, and I found myself again amid the tumult of human life, and of my and its weak efforts and faulty deeds. A feeling of horror came over me, as when a person suddenly finds himself alone in the midst of immeasurable mountains of ice. Everything about me and in me was cold and strange, and even my tears froze.

Wonderful worlds appeared and vanished before me in my uneasy dream. I was sick and suffered great pain, but I loved my sickness and welcomed the suffering. I hated everything earthly and was glad to see it all punished and destroyed. I felt so alone and so strangely. And as a delicate spirit often grows melancholy in the very lap of happiness over its own joy, and at the very acme of its existence becomes conscious of the futility of it all, so did I regard my suffering with mysterious pleasure. I regarded it as the symbol of life in general; I believed that I was seeing and feeling the everlasting discord by means of which all things come into being and exist, and the lovely forms of refined culture seemed dead and trivial to me in comparison with this monstrous world of infinite strength and of unending struggle and warfare, even into the most hidden depths of existence.

On account of this remarkable feeling sickness acquired the character of a peculiar world complete in itself. I felt that its mysterious life was richer and deeper than the vulgar health of the dreaming sleep-walkers all around me. And with the sickliness, which was not at all unpleasant, this feeling also clung to me and completely separated me from other men, just as I was sundered from the earth by the thought that your nature and my love had been too sacred not to take speedy flight from earth and its coarse ties. It seemed to me that all was right so, and that your unavoidable death was nothing more than a gentle awakening after a light sleep.

I too thought that I was awake when I saw your picture, which evermore transfigured itself into a cheerful diffused purity. Serious and yet charming, quite you and yet no longer you, the divine form irradiated by a wonderful light! Now it was like the terrible gleam of visible omnipotence, now like a soft ray of golden childhood. With long, still drafts my spirit drank from the cool spring of pure passion and became secretly intoxicated with it. And in this blissful drunkenness I felt a spiritual worthiness of a peculiar kind, because every earthly sentiment was entirely strange to me, and the feeling never left me that I was consecrated to death.

The years passed slowly by, and deeds and works advanced laboriously to their goal, one after the other — a goal that seemed as little mine as the deeds and works seemed to be what they are called. To me they were merely holy symbols, and everything brought me back to my one Beloved, who was the mediatrix between my dismembered ego and the one eternal and indivisible humanity; all existence was an uninterrupted divine service of solitary love.

Finally I became conscious that it was now nearly over. The brow was no longer smooth and the locks were becoming gray. My career was ended, but not completed. The best strength of life was gone, and still Art and Virtue stood ever unattainable before me. I should have despaired, had I not perceived and idolized both in you, gracious Madonna, and you and your gentle godliness in myself.

Then you appeared to me, beckoning with the summons of Death. An earnest longing for you and for freedom seized me; I yearned for my dear old fatherland, and was about to shake off the dust of travel, when I was suddenly called back to life by the promise and reassurance of your recovery.

Then I became conscious that I had been dreaming; I shuddered at all the significant suggestions and similarities, and stood anxiously by the boundless deep of this inward truth.

Do you know what has become most obvious to me as a result of it all? First, that I idolize you, and that it is a good thing that I do so. We two are one, and only in that way does a human being become one and a complete entity, that is, by regarding and poetically conceiving himself as the centre of everything and the spirit of the world. But why poetically conceive, since we find the germ of everything in ourselves, and yet remain forever only a fragment of ourselves?

And then I now know that death can also be felt as beautiful and sweet. I understand how the free creature can quietly long in the bloom of all its strength for dissolution and freedom, and can joyfully entertain the thought of return as a morning sun of hope.

A Reflection

It has often struck my mind how extraordinary it is that sensible and dignified people can keep on, with such great seriousness and such never-tiring industry, forever playing the little game in perpetual rotation — a game which is of no use whatever and has no definite object, although it is perhaps the earliest of all games. Then my spirit inquired what Nature, who everywhere thinks so profoundly and employs her cunning in such a large way, and who, instead of talking wittily, behaves wittily, may think of those naïve intimations which refined speakers designate only by their namelessness.

And this namelessness itself has an equivocal significance. The more modest and modern one is, the more fashionable does it become to put an immodest interpretation upon it. For the old gods, on the contrary, all life had a certain classic dignity whereby even the immodest heroic art is rendered lifelike. The mass of such works and the great inventive power displayed in them settles the question of rank and nobility in the realm of mythology.

This number and this power are all right, but they are not the highest. Where does the longed-for ideal lie concealed? Or does the aspiring heart evermore find in the highest of all plastic arts only new manners and never a perfected style?

Thinking has a peculiarity of its own in that, next to itself, it loves to think about something which it can think about forever. For that reason the life of the cultured and thinking man is a constant study and meditation on the beautiful riddle of his destiny. He is always defining it in a new way, for just that is his entire destiny, to be defined and to define. Only in the search itself does the human mind discover the secret that it seeks.

But what, then, is it that defines or is defined? Among men it is the nameless. And what is the nameless among women? — The Indefinite.

The Indefinite is more mysterious, but the Definite has greater magic power. The charming confusion of the Indefinite is more romantic, but the noble refinement of the Definite has more of genius. The beauty of the Indefinite is perishable, like the life of the flowers and the everlasting youth of mortal feelings; the energy of the Definite is transitory, like a genuine storm and genuine inspiration.

Who can measure and compare two things which have endless worth, when both are held together in the real Definiteness, which is intended to fill all gaps and to act as mediator between the male and female individual and infinite humanity?

The Definite and the Indefinite and the entire abundance of their definite and indefinite relations — that is the one and all, the most wonderful and yet the simplest, the simplest and yet the highest. The universe itself is only a toy of the Definite and the Indefinite; and the real definition of the definable is an allegorical miniature of the life and activity of ever-flowing creation.

With everlasting immutable symmetry both strive in different ways to get near to the Infinite and to escape from it. With light but sure advances the Indefinite expands its native wish from the beautiful centre of Finiteness into the boundless. Complete Definiteness, on the other hand, throws itself with a bold leap out of the blissful dream of the infinite will into the limits of the finite deed, and by self-refinement ever increases in magnanimous self-restraint and beautiful self-sufficiency.

In this symmetry is also revealed the incredible humor with which consistent Nature accomplishes her most universal and her most simple antithesis. Even in the most delicate and most artistic organization these comical points of the great All reveal themselves, like a miniature, with roguish significance, and give to all individuality, which exists only by them and by the seriousness of their play, its final rounding and perfection.

Through this individuality and that allegory the bright ideal of witty sensuality blooms forth from the striving after the Unconditioned.

Now everything is clear! Hence the omnipresence of the nameless, unknown divinity. Nature herself wills the everlasting succession of constantly repeated efforts; and she wills, too, that every individual shall be complete, unique and new in himself — a true image of the supreme, indivisible Individuality. Sinking deeper into this Individuality, my Reflection took such an individual turn that it presently began to cease and to forget itself.

" What point have all these allusions, which with senseless sense on the outward boundaries of sensuality, or rather in the middle of it, I will not say play, but contend with, each other? "

So you will surely ask, and so the good Juliana would ask, though no doubt in different language.

Dear Beloved! Shall the nosegay contain only demure roses, quiet forget-me-nots, modest violets and other maidenlike and childlike flowers? May it not contain anything and everything that shines strangely in wonderful glory?

Masculine awkwardness is a manifold thing, and rich in blossoms and fruits of all kinds. Let the wonderful plant, which I will not name, have its place. It will serve at least as a foil to the bright-gleaming pomegranate and the yellow oranges. Or should there be, perhaps, instead of this motley abundance, only one perfect flower, which combines all the beauties of the rest and renders their existence superfluous?

I do not apologize for doing what I should rather like to do again, with full confidence in your objective sense for the artistic productions of the awkwardness which, often and not unwillingly, borrows the material for its creations from masculine inspiration.

It is a soft Furioso and a clever Adagio of friendship. You will be able to learn various things from it; that men can hate with as uncommon delicacy as you can love; that they then remold a wrangle, after it is over, into a distinction; and that you may make as many observations about it as pleases you.

JULIUS TO ANTONIO

You have changed a great deal of late. Beware, my friend, that you do not lose your sense for the great before you realize it. What will that mean? You will finally acquire so much modesty and delicacy that heart and feeling will be lost. Where then will be your manhood and your power of action? I shall yet come to the point of treating you as you treat me, since we have not been living with each other, but near each other. I shall have to set limits for you and say: Even if he has a sense for everything else that is beautiful, still he lacks all sense for friendship. Still I shall never set myself up as a moral critic of my friend and his conduct; he who can do that does not deserve the rare good fortune to have a friend.

That you wrong yourself first of all only makes the matter worse. Tell me seriously, do you think there is virtue in these cool subtleties of feeling, in these cunning mental gymnastics, which consume the marrow of a man's life and leave him hollow inside?

For a long time I was resigned and said nothing. I did not doubt at all that you, who know so much, would also probably know the causes that have destroyed our friendship. It almost seems as if I was mistaken, since you were so astonished at my attaching myself to Edward and asked how you had offended me, as if you did not understand it. If it were only that, only some one thing like that, then it would not be worth while to ask such a painful question; the question would answer and settle itself. But is it not more than that, when on every occasion I must feel it a fresh desecration to tell you everything about Edward, just as it happened? To be sure you have done nothing, have not even said anything aloud; but I know and see very well how you think about it. And if I did not know it and see it, where would be the invisible communion of our spirits and the beautiful magic of this communion? It certainly cannot occur to you to want to hold back still longer, and by sheer finesse to try to end the misunderstanding; for otherwise I should myself really have nothing more to say.

You two are unquestionably separated by an everlasting chasm. The quiet, clear depth of your being and the hot struggle of his restless life lie at the opposite ends of human existence. He is all action, you are a sensitive, contemplative nature. For that reason you should have sense for everything, and you really do have it, save when you cultivate an intentional reserve. And that really vexes me. Better that you should hate the noble fellow than misjudge him. But where will it lead, if you unnaturally accustom yourself to use your utmost wit in finding nothing but the commonplace in what little of greatness and beauty there is in him, and that without renouncing your claim to a liberal mind?

Is that your boasted many-sidedness? To be sure you observe the principle of equality, and one man does not fare much better than another, except that each one is misunderstood in a peculiar way. Have you not also forced me to say nothing to you, or to anyone else, about that which I feel to be the highest? And that merely because you could not hold back your opinion until it was the proper time, and because your mind is always imagining limitations in others before it can find its own. You have almost obliged me to explain to you how great my own worth really is; how much more just and safe it would have been, if now and then you had not passed judgment but had believed; if you had presupposed in me an unknown infinite.

To be sure my own negligence is to blame for it all. Perhaps too it was idiosyncrasy — that I wanted to share with you the entire present, without letting you know anything about the past and the future. Somehow it went against my feelings, and I regarded it too as superfluous; for, as a matter of fact, I gave you credit for a great deal of intelligence.

O Antonio, if I could be doubtful about the eternal truths, you might have brought me to the point of regarding that quiet, beautiful friendship, which is based merely upon the harmony of being and living together, as something false and perverse.

Is it now still incomprehensible if I quite go over to the other side? I renounce refined enjoyment and plunge into the wild battle of life. I hasten to Edward. Everything is agreed upon. We will not only live together, but we will work and act in fraternal unison. He is rough and uncouth, his virtue is strong rather than sensitive. But he has a great manly heart, and in better times than ours he would have been, I say it boldly, a hero.

II

It is no doubt well that we have at last talked with each other again. I am quite content, too, that you did not wish to write, and that you spoke slightingly of poor innocent letters because you really have more genius for talking. But I have in my heart one or two things more that I could not say to you, and will now endeavor to intimate with the pen.

But why in this way? Oh, my friend, if I only knew of a more refined and subtle mode of communicating my thoughts from afar in some exquisite form! To me conversation is too loud, too near, and also too disconnected. These separate words always present one side only, a part of the connected, coherent whole, which I should like to intimate in its complete harmony.

And can men who are going to live together be too tender toward each other in their intercourse? It is not as if I were afraid of saying something too strong, and for that reason avoided speaking of certain persons and certain affairs. So far as that is concerned, I think that the boundary line between us is forever destroyed.

What I still had to say to you is something very general, and yet I prefer to choose this roundabout way. I do not know whether it is false or true delicacy, but I should find it very hard to talk with you, face to face, about friendship. And yet it is thoughts on that subject that I wish to convey to you. The application — and it is about that I am most concerned — you will yourself easily be able to make.

To my mind there are two kinds of friendship. The first is entirely external. Insatiably it rushes from deed to deed, receives every worthy man into the great alliance of united heroes, ties the old knot tighter by means of every virtue, and ever aspires to win new brothers; the more it has, the more it wants. Call to mind the antique world and you will find this friendship, which wages honest war against all that is bad, even were it in ourselves or in the beloved friend — you will find this friendship everywhere, where noble strength exerts influence on great masses, and creates or governs worlds. Now times are different; but the ideal of this friendship will stay with me as long as I live.

The other friendship is entirely internal. A wonderful symmetry of the most intimately personal, as if it had been previously ordained that one should always be perfecting himself. All thoughts and feelings become social through the mutual excitation and development of the holiest. And this purely spiritual love, this beautiful mysticism of intercourse, does not merely hover as the distant goal of a perhaps futile effort. No, it is only to be found complete. There no deception occurs, as in that other heroic form. Whether a man's virtue will stand the test, his actions must show. But he who inwardly sees and feels humanity and the world will not be apt to look for public disinterestedness where it is not to be found.

He only is capable of this friendship who is quite composed within himself, and who knows how to honor with humility the divinity of the other.

When the gods have bestowed such friendship upon a man, he can do nothing more than protect it carefully against everything external, and guard its holy being. For the delicate flower is perishable.

Longing and Peace

Lightly dressed, Lucinda and Julius stood by the window in the summer-house, refreshing themselves in the cool morning air. They were absorbed in watching the rising sun, which the birds were welcoming with their joyous songs.

"Julius," asked Lucinda, "why is it that I feel a deep longing in this serene peace?"

"It is only in longing that we find peace," answered Julius. "Yes, there is peace only when the spirit is entirely free to long and to seek, where it can find nothing higher than its own longing."

"Only in the peace of the night," said Lucinda, "do longing and love shine full and bright, like this glorious sun."

"And in the daytime," responded Julius, "the happiness of love shines dimly, even as the pale moonlight."

"Or it appears and vanishes suddenly into the general darkness," added Lucinda, "like those flashes of lightning which lighted up the room when the moon was hidden."

"Only in the night," said Julius, "does the little nightingale utter wails and deep sighs. Only in the night does the flower shyly open and breathe freely the fragrant air, intoxicating both mind and senses in equal delight. Only in the night, Lucinda, does the bold speech of deep passion flow divinely from the lips, which in the noise of the day close with tender pride their sweet sanctuary."

LUCINDA

It is not I, my Julius, whom you portray as so holy; although I would fain wail like the nightingale, and although I am, as I inwardly feel, consecrated to the night. It is you, it is the wonderful flower of your fantasy which you perceive in me, when the noise has died down and nothing commonplace distracts your noble mind.

JULIUS

Away with modesty and flattery! Remember, you are the priestess of the night. Even in the daylight the dark lustre of your abundant hair, the bright black of your earnest eyes, the majesty of your brow and your entire body, all proclaim it.

LUCINDA

My eyes droop while you praise, because the noisy morning dazzles and the joyous songs of the merry birds strengthen and awe my soul. At another time my ear would eagerly drink in my lovely friend's sweet talk here in the quiet, dark coolness of the evening.

JULIUS

It is not vain fantasy. My longing for you is constant and everlastingly unsatisfied.

LUCINDA

Be it what it may, you are the object in which my being finds peace.

JULIUS

Holy peace, dear friend, I have found only in that longing.

LUCINDA

And I have found that holy longing in this beautiful peace.

JULIUS

Alas, that the garish light is permitted to lift the veil that so concealed those flames, that the play of the senses was fain to cool and assuage the burning soul.

LUCINDA

And so sometimes the cold and serious day will annihilate the warm night of life, when youth flies by and I renounce you, even as you once more freatly renounced great love.

JULIUS

Oh, that I might show you my unknown friend, and her the wonder of my wondrous happiness.

LUCINDA

You love her still and will love her forever, though forever mine. That is the wonder of your wondrous heart.

JULIUS

No more wondrous than yours. I see you, clasped against my breast, playing with your Guido's locks, while we twain in brotherly union adorn your serious brow with eternal wreaths of joy.

LUCINDA

Let rest in darkness, bring not forth into light, that which blooms sacredly in the quiet depths of the heart.

JULIUS

Where may the billow of life be sporting with the impulsive youth whom tender feeling and wild fate vehemently dragged into the harsh world?

LUCINDA

Uniquely transfigured, the pure image of the noble Unknown shines in the blue sky of your pure soul.

JULIUS

Oh eternal longing! But surely the futile desire, the vain glare, of the day will grow dim and go out, and there will be forever more the restful feeling of a great night of love.

LUCINDA

Thus does the woman's heart in my ardent breast feel, when I am allowed to be as I am. It longs only for your longing, and is peaceful where you find peace.

Dallyings of the Fantasy

Life itself, the delicate child of the gods, is crowded out by the hard, loud preparations for living, and is pitifully stifled in the loving embrace of apelike Care.

To have purposes, to carry out purposes, to interweave purposes artfully with purposes for a purpose: this habit is so deeply rooted in the foolish nature of godlike man, that if once he wishes to move freely, without any purpose, on the inner stream of ever-flowing images and feelings, he must actually resolve to do it and make it a set purpose.

It is the acme of intelligence to keep silent from choice, to surrender the soul to the fantasy, and not to disturb the sweet dallyings of the young mother with her child. But rarely is the mind so intelligent after the golden age of its innocence. It would fain possess the soul alone; and even when she supposes herself alone with her natural love, the understanding listens furtively and substitutes for the holy child's-play mere memories of former purposes or prospects of new ones. Yes, it even continues to give to the hollow, cold illusions a tinge of color and a fleeting heat; and thus by its imitative skill it tries to steal from the innocent fantasy its very innermost being.

But the youthful soul does not allow itself to be cheated by the cunning of the prematurely old Understanding, and is always watching while its darling plays with the beautiful pictures of the beautiful world. Willingly she allows her brow to be adorned with the wreaths which the child plaits from the blossoms of life, and willingly she sinks into waking slumber, dreaming of the music of love, hearing the friendly and mysterious voices of the gods, like the separate sounds of a distant romance.

Old, well-known feelings make music from the depths of the past and the future. They touch the listening spirit but lightly, and quickly lose themselves in the background of hushed music and dim love. Every one lives and loves, complains and rejoices, in beautiful confusion. Here at a noisy feast the lips of all the joyful guests open in general song, and there the lonely maiden becomes mute in the presence of the friend in whom she would fain confide, and with smiling mouth refuses the kiss. Thoughtfully I strew flowers on the grave of the prematurely dead son, flowers which presently, full of joy and hope, I offer to the bride of the beloved brother; while the high priestess beckons to me and holds out her hand for a solemn covenant to swear by the pure eternal fire eternal purity and never-dying enthusiasm. I hasten away from the altar and the priestess to seize my sword and plunge with the host of heroes into a battle, which I soon forget, seeing in the deepest solitude only the sky and myself.

The soul that has such dreams in sleep continues to have them even when it is awake. It feels itself entwined by the blossoms of love, it takes care not to destroy the loose wreaths; it gladly gives itself up a prisoner, consecrates itself to the fantasy, and willingly allows itself to be ruled by the child, which rewards all maternal cares by its sweet playfulness.

Then a fresh breath of the bloom of youth and a halo of child-like ecstasy comes over the whole of life. The man deifies his Beloved, the mother her child, and all men everlasting humanity.

Now the soul understands the wail of the nightingale and the smile of the new-born babe; the significance of the flowers and the mysterious hieroglyphics of the starry sky;

the holy import of life as well as the beautiful language of Nature. All things speak to it, and everywhere it sees the lovely spirit through the delicate envelope.

On this gaily decorated floor it glides through the light dance of life, innocent, and concerned only to follow the rhythm of sociability and friendship, and not to disturb the harmony of love. And during it all an eternal song, of which it catches now and then a few words which adumbrate still higher wonders.

Ever more beautifully this magic circle encompasses the charmed soul, and that which it forms or speaks sounds like a wonderful romance of childhood's beautiful and mysterious divinities — a romantic tale, accompanied by the bewitching music of the feelings, and adorned with the fairest flowers of lovely life.

APHORISMS

By Friedrich Schlegel

From the *Lyceum and the Athenæum* (1797–1800)

TRANSLATED BY LOUIS H. GRAY

PERFECT understanding of a classic work should never be possible; but those who are cultivated and who are still striving after further culture, must always desire to learn more from it.

If an author is to be able to write well upon a theme, he must no longer feel interest in it; the thought which is to be soberly expressed must already be entirely past and must no longer personally concern the writer. So long as the artist invents and is inspired, he is in an unfavorable situation, at least for communicating his concepts. He will then wish to say everything — a false tendency of young geniuses, or an instinctively correct prejudice of old bunglers. In this way he mistakes the value and the dignity of self-restraint, although for the artist, as for the man, this is the first and the last, the most needful and the highest.

We should never appeal to the spirit of antiquity as an authority. There is this peculiarity about spirits: they cannot be grasped with the hands and be held up before others. Spirits reveal themselves only to spirits. Here, too, the briefest and most concise course would doubtless be to prove, through good works, our possession of the faith which alone gives salvation.

He who desires something infinite knows not what he desires; but the converse of this proposition is not true.

In the ordinary kind of fair or even good translation it is precisely the best part of a work that is lost.

It is impossible to offend a man if he will not be offended.

Every honest author writes for no one or for all men; he who writes that this one or that one may read him, deserves not to be read at all.

In the poetry of the Ancients we see the perfection of the letter: in that of the moderns we divine the growth of the spirit.

The Germans are said to be the foremost nation of the world as regards artistic sense and scientific genius. Very true, only — there are very few Germans.

Almost all marriages are only concubinages, morganatic wedlock, or, rather, provisional attempts and remote approximations to a real marriage, the peculiar essence of which consists in the fact that more than one person are to become but one, not in accordance with the paradoxes of this system or that, but in harmony with all spiritual and temporal laws. A fine concept, although its realization seems to have many grave difficulties. For this very reason there should here be the least possible restriction of the caprice which may well have a word to say when it becomes a question of whether one is to be an individual in himself or is to be merely an integral part of a corporate personality; nor is it easy to see what objections, on principle, could be made to a marriage *à quatre.* If the State, however, is determined to hold together, even by force, the unsuccessful attempts at marriage, it thereby impedes the very possibility of marriage, which might be furthered by new — and perhaps happier — attempts.

A regiment of soldiers on parade is, according to some philosophers, a system.

A man can only become a philosopher, he cannot be one; so soon as he believes that he is one, he ceases to become one.

The printed page is to thought what a nursery is to the first kiss.

The historian is a prophet looking backward.

There are people whose entire activity consists in saying "No." It would be no small thing always to be able rightly to say "No," but he who can do nothing more, surely cannot do it rightly. The taste of these negationists is an admirable shears to cleanse the extremities of genius; their enlightenment a great snuffer for the flame of enthusiasm; and their reason a mild laxative for immoderate passion and love.

Every great philosopher has always so explained his predecessors — often unintentionally — that it seemed as though they had not in the least been understood before him.

As a transitory condition skepticism is logical insurrection; as a system it is anarchy; skeptical method would thus be approximately like insurgent government.

At the phrases " his philosophy," " my philosophy," we always recall the words in *Nathan the Wise:* " Who owns God? What sort of a God is that who is owned by a man? "

What happens in poetry happens never or always; otherwise, it is no true poetry. We ought not to believe that it is now actually happening.

Women have absolutely no sense of art, though they may have of poetry. They have no natural disposition for the sciences, though they may have for philosophy. They are by no means wanting in power of speculation and intuitive perception of the infinite; they lack only power of abstraction, which is far more easy to be learned.

That is beautiful which is charming and sublime at the same time.

Romantic poetry is a progressive universal poetry. Its mission is not merely to reunite all the separate categories of poetry, and to bring poetry into contact with philosophy and with rhetoric. It will, and should, also now mingle and now amalgamate poetry and prose, genius and criticism, artistic poetry and natural poetry; make poetry living and social, and life and society poetic; poetize wit; and fill and saturate the forms of art with sterling material of every kind, and inspire them with the vibrations of humor. It embraces everything, if only it is poetic — from the greatest system of art which, in its turn, includes many systems within itself, down to the sigh, the kiss, which the musing child breathes forth in artless song. It can so be lost in what it represents that it might be supposed that its one and all is the characterization of poetic individuals of every type; and yet no form has thus far arisen which would be equally adapted perfectly to express the author's mind; so that many artists who desired only to write a romance have more or less described themselves. Romantic poetry alone can, like the epic, become a mirror of the entire world that surrounds it, and a picture of its age. And yet, free from all real and ideal interests, it, too, most of all, can soar, midway between that which is presented and him who presents, on the wings of poetic reflection; it can ever re-intensify this reflection and multiply it as in an endless series of mirrors. It is capable of the highest and of the most universal culture — not merely from within outward, but also from without inward — since it organizes similarly all parts of that which is destined to become a whole; thus the prospect of an endlessly developing classicism is opened up to it. Among the arts romantic poetry is what wit is to philosophy, and what society, association, friendship, and love are in life. Other types of poetry are finished, and can now be completely analyzed. The romantic type of poetry is still in process of development; indeed, it is its peculiar essence that it can eternally only be in process of development, and that it can never be completed. It can be exhausted by no theory, and only a divinatory criticism might dare to wish to characterize its ideal. It alone is infinite, even as it alone is free; and as its first law it recognizes that the arbitrariness of the poet brooks no superior law. The romantic style of poetry is the only one which is more than a style, and which is, as it were, poetry itself; for in a certain sense all poetry is, or should be, romantic.

In the ancients every man has found what he needed or desired — especially himself.

The French Revolution, Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre,* and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* are the three greatest tendencies of the age. Whoever is offended at this juxtaposition, and whoever can deem no revolution important which is not boisterous and material, has not yet risen to the broad and lofty viewpoint of the history of mankind. Even in our meagre histories of culture, which, for the most part, resemble a collection of variant readings accompanied by a running commentary the classical text of which has perished, many a little book of which the noisy rabble took scant notice in its day, plays a greater rôle than all that this rabble did.

It is very one-sided and presumptuous to assert that there is only one Mediator. To the ideal Christian — and in this respect the unique Spinoza comes nearest to being one — everything ought to be a Mediator.

He alone can be an artist who has a religion of his own, an original view of the infinite.

It is a peculiar trait of humanity that it must exalt itself above humanity.

Plato's philosophy is a worthy preface to the religion of the future.

Man is free when he brings forth God or makes Him visible; and thereby he becomes immortal.

The morality of a book lies not in its theme or in the relation of the writer to his public, but in the spirit of the treatment. If this breathes the full abundance of humanity, it is moral. If it is merely the work of an isolated power and art, it is not moral.

He is an artist who has his centre within himself. He who lacks this must choose a definite leader and mediator outside himself — naturally, not forever, but only at the first. For without a living centre man cannot exist, and if he does not yet have it within himself he can seek it only in a human being, and only a human being and his centre can arouse and awaken the artist's own.

NOVALIS

(Friedrich von Hardenberg)

THE STORY OF HYACINTH AND ROSEBLOSSOM

From *The Novices at Saïs* (1798)

TRANSLATED BY LILLIE WINTER

LONG ages ago there lived in the far west a guileless youth. He was very good, but at the same time peculiar beyond measure. He constantly grieved over nothing at all, always went about alone and silent, sat down by himself whenever the others played and were happy, and was always thinking about strange things. Woods and caves were his favorite haunts, and there he talked constantly with birds and animals, with rocks and trees — naturally not a word of sense, nothing but stuff silly enough to make one die a-laughing. Yet he continued to remain morose and grave in spite of the fact that the squirrel, the long-tailed monkey, the parrot, and the bullfinch took great pains to distract him and lead him into the right path. The goose would tell fairy-tales, and in the midst of them the brook would tinkle a ballad; a great heavy stone would caper about ludicrously; the rose stealing up affectionately behind him would creep through his locks, and the ivy stroke his careworn forehead. But his melancholy and his gravity were obstinate. His parents were greatly grieved; they did not know what to do. He was healthy and ate well. His parents had never hurt his feelings, nor until a few years since had any one been more cheerful and lively than he; always he had been at the head of every game, and was well liked by all the girls. He was very handsome indeed, looked like a picture, danced beautifully. Among the girls there was one sweet and very pretty child. She looked as though she were of wax, with hair

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NOVALIS
(Friedrich von Hardenberg)

like silk spun of gold, lips as red as cherries, a figure like a little doll, eyes black as the raven. Such was her charm that whoever saw her might have pined away with love. At that time Roseblossom, that was her name, cherished a heart-felt affection for the handsome Hyacinth, that was his name, and he loved her with all his life. The other children did not know it. A little violet had been the first to tell them; the house-cats had noticed it, to be sure, for their parents' homes stood near each other. When, therefore, Hyacinth was standing at night at his window and Roseblossom at hers, and the pussies ran by on a mouse-hunt, they would see both standing, and would often laugh and titter so loudly that the children would hear them and grow angry. The violet had confided it to the strawberry, she told it to her friend, the gooseberry, and she never stopped taunting when Hyacinth passed; so that very soon the whole garden and the goods heard the news, and whenever Hyacinth went out they called on every side: "Little Roseblossom is my sweetheart!" Now Hyacinth was vexed, and again he could not help laughing from the bottom of his heart when the lizard would come sliding up, seat himself on a warm stone, wag his little tail, and sing:

Little Roseblossom, good and kind,
Suddenly was stricken blind.
Her mother Hyacinth she thought
And to embrace him forthwith sought.
But when she felt the face was strange,
Just think, no terror made her change!
But on his cheek pressed she her kiss,
And she had noted naught amiss.

Alas, how soon did all this bliss pass away! There came along a man from foreign lands; he had traveled everywhere, had a long beard, deep-set eyes, terrible eyebrows, a strange cloak with many folds and queer figures woven in it. He seated himself in front of the house that belonged to Hyacinth's parents. Now Hyacinth was very curious and sat down beside him and fetched him bread and wine. Then the man parted his white beard and told stories until late at night and Hyacinth did not stir nor did he tire of listening. As far as one could learn afterward the man had related much about foreign lands, unknown regions, astonishingly wondrous things, staying there three days and creeping down into deep pits with Hyacinth. Roseblossom cursed the old sorcerer enough, for Hyacinth was all eagerness for his tales and cared for nothing, scarcely even eating a little food. Finally the man took his departure, not, however, without leaving Hyacinth a booklet that not a soul could read. The youth had even given him fruit, bread, and wine to take along and had accompanied him a long way. Then he came back melancholy and began an entirely new mode of life. Roseblossom grieved for him very pitifully, for from that time on he paid little attention to her and always kept to himself.

Now it came about that he returned home one day and was like one new-born. He fell on his parents' neck and wept. "I must depart for foreign lands," he said; "the strange old woman in the forest told me that I must get well again; she threw the book into the fire and urged me to come to you and ask for your blessing. Perhaps I shall be back soon, perhaps never more. Say good-bye to Roseblossom for me. I should have liked to speak to her, I do not know what is the matter, something drives me away; whenever I want to think of old times, mightier thoughts rush in immediately; my peace is gone, my courage and love with it, I must go in quest of them. I should like to tell you whither, but I do not know myself; thither where dwells the mother of all things, the veiled virgin. For her my heart burns. Farewell!"

He tore himself away and departed. His parents lamented and shed tears. Roseblossom kept in her chamber and wept bitterly. Hyacinth now hastened as fast as he could through valleys and wildernesses, across mountains and streams, toward the mysterious country. Everywhere he asked men and animals, rocks and trees, for the sacred goddess (Isis). Some laughed, some were silent, nowhere did he receive an answer. At first he passed through wild, uninhabited regions, mist and clouds obstructed his path, it was always storming; later he found unbounded deserts of glowing hot sand, and as he wandered his mood changed, time seemed to grow longer, and his inner unrest was calmed. He became more tranquil and the violent excitement within him was gradually transformed to a gentle but strong impulse, which took possession of his whole nature. It seemed as though many years lay behind him. Now, too, the region again became richer and more varied, the air warm and blue, the path more level; green bushes attracted him with their pleasant shade but he did not understand their language, nor did they seem to speak, and yet they filled his heart with verdant colors, with quiet and freshness. Mightier and mightier grew within him that sweet longing, broader and softer the leaves, noisier and happier the birds and animals, balmier the fruits, darker the heavens, warmer the air and more fiery his love; faster and faster passed the Time, as though it knew that it was approaching the goal.

One day he came upon a crystal spring and a bevy of flowers that were going down to a valley between black columns reaching to the sky. With familiar words they greeted him kindly. "My dear countrymen," he said, "pray, where am I to find the sacred abode of Isis? It must be somewhere in this vicinity, and you are probably better acquainted here than I." "We, too, are only passing through this region," the flowers answered; "a family of spirits is traveling and we are making ready the road and preparing lodgings for them; but we came through a region lately where we heard her name called. Just walk upward in the direction from which we are coming and you will be sure to learn more." The flowers and the spring smiled as they said this, offered him a drink of fresh water, and went on.

Hyacinth followed their advice, asked and asked, and finally reached that long-sought dwelling concealed behind palms and other choice plants. His heart beat with infinite longing and the most delicious yearning thrilled him in this abode of the eternal seasons. Amid heavenly fragrance he fell into slumber, since naught but dreams might lead him to the most sacred place. To the tune of charming melodies and in changing harmonies did his dream guide him mysteriously through endless apartments filled with curious things. Everything seemed so familiar to him and yet amid a splendor that he had never seen; then even the last tinge of earthliness vanished as though dissipated in the air, and he stood before the celestial virgin. He lifted the filmy, shimmering veil and Roseblossom fell into his arms. From afar a strain of music accompanied the mystery of the loving reunion, the outpourings of their longing, and excluded all that was alien from this delightful spot. After that Hyacinth lived many years with Roseblossom near his happy parents and comrades, and innumerable grandchildren thanked the mysterious old woman for her advice and her fire; for at that time people got as many children as they wanted.

APHORISMS*

By NOVALIS

TRANSLATED BY FREDERIC H. HEDGE

WHERE no gods are, spectres rule.

The best thing that the French achieved by their Revolution, was a portion of Germanity.

Germanity is genuine popularity, and therefore an ideal.

Where children are, there is the golden age.

Spirit is now active here and there: when will Spirit be active in the whole? When will mankind, in the mass, begin to consider?

Nature is pure Past, foregone freedom; and therefore, throughout, the soil of history.

The antithesis of body and spirit is one of the most remarkable and dangerous of all antitheses. It has played an important part in history.

Only by comparing ourselves, as men, with other rational beings, could we know what we truly are, what position we occupy.

The history of Christ is as surely poetry as it is history. And, in general, only that history is history which might also be fable.

The Bible begins gloriously with Paradise, the symbol of youth, and ends with the everlasting kingdom, with the holy city. The history of every man should be a Bible.

Prayer is to religion what thinking is to philosophy. To pray is to make religion.

The more sinful man feels himself, the more Christian he is.

Christianity is opposed to science, to art, to enjoyment in the proper sense.

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* Permission Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.

It goes forth from the common man. It inspires the great majority of the limited on earth.

It is the germ of all democracy, the highest fact in the domain of the popular.

Light is the symbol of genuine self-possession. Therefore light, according to analogy, is the action of the self-contact of matter. Accordingly, day is the consciousness of the planet, and while the sun, like a god, in eternal self-action, inspires the centre, one planet after another closes one eye for a longer or shorter time, and with cool sleep refreshes itself for new life and contemplation. Accordingly, here, too, there is religion. For is the life of the planets aught else but sun-worship?

The Holy Ghost is more than the Bible. This should be our teacher of religion, not the dead, earthly, equivocal letter.

All faith is miraculous, and worketh miracles.

Sin is indeed the real evil in the world. All calamity proceeds from that. He who understands sin, understands virtue and Christianity, himself and the world.

The greatest of miracles is a virtuous act.

If a man could suddenly believe, in sincerity, that he was moral, he would be so.

We need not fear to admit that man has a preponderating tendency to evil. So much the better is he by nature, for only the unlike attracts.

Everything distinguished (peculiar) deserves ostracism. Well for it if it ostracizes itself. Everything absolute must quit the world.

A time will come, and that soon, when all men will be convinced that there can be no king without a republic, and no republic without a king; that both are as inseparable as body and soul. The true king will be a republic, the true republic a king.

In cheerful souls there is no wit. Wit shows a disturbance of the equipoise.

Most people know not how interesting they are, what interesting things they really utter. A true representation of themselves, a record and estimate of their sayings, would make them astonished at themselves, would help them to discover in themselves an entirely new world.

Man is the Messiah of Nature.

The soul is the most powerful of all poisons. It is the most penetrating and diffusible stimulus.

Every sickness is a musical problem; the cure is the musical solution.

Inoculation with death, also, will not be wanting in some future universal therapy.

The idea of a perfect health is interesting only in a scientific point of view. Sickness is necessary to individualization.

If God could be man, he can also be stone, plant, animal, element, and perhaps, in this way, there is a continuous redemption in Nature.

Life is a disease of the spirit, a passionate activity. Rest is the peculiar property of the spirit. From the spirit comes gravitation.

As nothing can be free, so, too, nothing can be forced, but spirit.

A space-filling individual is a body; a time-filling individual is a soul.

It should be inquired whether Nature has not essentially changed with the progress of culture.

All activity ceases when knowledge comes. The state of knowing is *eudæmonism,* blest repose of contemplation, heavenly quietism.

Miracles, as contradictions of Nature, are *amathematical.* But there are no miracles in this sense. What we so term, is intelligible precisely by means of mathematics; for nothing is miraculous to mathematics.

In music, mathematics appears formally, as revelation, as creative idealism. All enjoyment is musical, consequently mathematical. The highest life is mathematics.

There may be mathematicians of the first magnitude who cannot cipher. One can be a great cipherer without a conception of mathematics.

Instinct is genius in Paradise, before the period of self-abstraction (self-recognition).

The fate which oppresses us is the sluggishness of our spirit. By enlargement and cultivation of our activity, we change ourselves into fate. Everything appears to stream in upon us, because we do not stream out. We are negative, because we choose to be so; the more positive we become, the more negative will the world around us be, until, at last, there is no more negative, and we are all in all. God wills gods.

All power appears only in transition. Permanent power is stuff.

Every act of introversion — every glance into our interior — is at the same time ascension, going up to heaven, a glance at the veritable outward.

Only so far as a man is happily married to himself, is he fit for married life and family life, generally.

One must never confess that one loves one's self. The secret of this confession is the life-principle of the only true and eternal love.

We conceive God as personal, just as we conceive ourselves personal. God is just as personal and as individual as we are; for what we call *I* is not our true *I*, but only its off glance.

HYMN TO NIGHT (1800)

By Novalis

TRANSLATED BY PAUL B. THOMAS

WHO, that hath life and the gift of perception, loves not more than all the marvels seen far and wide in the space about him Light, the all-gladdening, with its colors, with its beams and its waves, its mild omnipresence as the arousing day? The giant world of restless stars breathes it, as were it the innermost soul of life, and lightly floats in its azure flood; the stone breathes it, sparkling and ever at rest, and the dreamy, drinking plant, and the savage, ardent, manifold-fashioned beast; but above all the glorious stranger with the thoughtful eyes, the airy step, and the lightly-closed, melodious lips. Like a king of terrestrial nature it calls every power to countless transformations, it forms and dissolves innumerable alliances and surrounds every earthly creature with its heavenly effulgence. Its presence alone reveals the marvelous splendor of the realms of the world.

Downward I turn my eyes to Night, the holy, ineffable, mysterious. Far below lies the world, sunk in a deep vault; void and lonely is its place. Deep melancholy is wafted through the chords of the breast. In drops of dew I'd fain sink down and mingle with the ashes. Far-off memories, desires of youth, dreams of childhood, long life's brief joys and vain hopes appear in gray garments like the evening mist after sunset. Light has pitched its gay tents in other regions. Will it perchance never return to its children, who are waiting for it with the faith of innocence?

What is it that suddenly wells up so forebodingly from beneath the heart and smothers the gentle breath of melancholy? Dark Night, dost thou also take pleasure in us? What hast thou beneath thy mantle which touches my soul with invisible force? Precious balsam drops from the bunch of poppies in thy hand. Thou raisest up the heavy wings of the soul; vaguely and inexpressibly we feel ourselves moved. Joyously fearful, I see an earnest face, which gently and reverently bends over me, and amid endlessly entangled locks shows the sweet youth of the mother. How poor and childish does Light seem to me now! How joyful and blessed the departure of day! Only for that reason, then, because Night turns thy servants from thee, didst thou scatter in the wide expanse of space the shining stars, to make known thine omnipotence and thy return, during the periods of thine absence? More heavenly than those twinkling stars seem to us the everlasting eyes which Night has opened within us. Farther they see than the palest of those numberless hosts; not needing light, they fathom the depths of a loving heart, filling a higher space with unspeakable delight.

Praise be to the queen of the world, to the high harbinger of holy worlds, to the fostress of blissful love! She sends thee to me, gentle sweetheart, lovely sun of the night. Now I am awake, for I am thine and mine; thou hast proclaimed to me that night is life and made a man of me. Consume my body with spiritual fire, that I may ethereally blend with thee, and then the bridal night may last forever.

"THOUGH NONE THY NAME SHOULD CHERISH"*

Though none Thy Name should cherish,
  My faith shall be the same,
Lest gratitude should perish
  And earth be brought to shame.
With meekness Thou did'st suffer
  The pangs of death for me,
With joy then I would offer
  This heart for aye to Thee.

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* Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.
From *Spiritual Songs* (1799).

THE QUEEN OF NIGHT

From the Painting by Moritz von Schwind

I weep with strong emotion
  That death has been Thy lot,
And yet that Thy devotion
  Thy people have forgot.
The blessings of salvation
  Thy perfect love has won,
Yet who in any nation
  Regards what Thou hast done?

With love Thou hast protected
  Each man his whole life through;
Though all Thy care rejected,
  No less would'st Thou be true.
Such love as Thine must vanquish
  The proudest soul at last,
'Twill turn to Thee in anguish
  And to Thy knees cling fast.

Thine influence hath bound me;
  Oh, if it be Thy will,
Be evermore around me,
  Be present with me still!
At length too shall the others
  Look up and long for rest,
And all my loving brothers
  Shall sink upon Thy breast.

TO THE VIRGIN*

A THOUSAND hands, devoutly tender,
  Have sought thy beauty to express,
But none, oh Mary, none can render,
  As my soul sees, thy loveliness.

I gaze till earth's confusion fadeth
  Like to a dream, and leaves behind
A heaven of sweetness which pervadeth
  My whole rapt being — heart and mind.

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* Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.
From *Spiritual Songs* (1799).

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

HYPERION'S SONG OF FATE* (1799)

WE wander there in the light
On flower-soft fields, ye blest immortal Spirits.
Radiant godlike zephyrs
Touch you as gently
As the hand of a master might
Touch the awed lute-string.
Free of fate as the slumbering
Infant, breathe the divine ones.
Guarded well
In the firm-sheathed bud
Blooms eternal
Each happy soul;
And their rapture-lit eyes
Shine with a tranquil
Unchanging lustre.
But we, 'tis our portion,
We never may be at rest.
They stumble, they vanish,
The suffering mortals,
Hurtling from one hard
Hour to another,
Like waves that are driven
From cliff-side to cliff-side,
Endlessly down the uncertain abyss.

EVENING PHANTASIE* (1799)

BEFORE his hut reposes in restful shade
The ploughman; wreaths of smoke from his hearth ascend.
And sweet to wand'rers comes the tone of
Evening bells from the peaceful village.

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* Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

Permission E. Linde & Co. E. Hader

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

The sailor too puts into the haven now,
In distant cities cheerily dies away
  The busy tumult; in the arbor
    Gleams the festal repast of friendship.

But whither I? In labor, for slight reward
We mortals live; in alternate rest and toil
  Contentment dwells; but why then sleeps not
    Hid in my bosom the thorn unsparing?

The ev'ning heaven blooms as with springtime's hue;
Uncounted bloom the roses, the golden world
  Seems wrapt in peace; oh, bear me thither,
    Purple-wrought clouds! And may for me there

Both love and grief dissolve in the joyous light!
But see, as if dispelled by the foolish prayer,
  The wonder fades! 'Tis dark, and lonely
    Under the heaven I stand as erstwhile.

Come then to me, soft Sleep. Overmuch requires
The heart; and yet thou too at the last shalt fade,
  Oh youth, thou restless dream-pursuer!
    Peaceful and happy shall age then follow.

LUDWIG TIECK

PUSS IN BOOTS (1797)

A fairy-tale for children in three acts, with interludes, a prologue and an epilogue.

TRANSLATED BY LILLIE WINTER, B.A.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The King
The Princess, *his daughter*
Prince Nathaniel *of Malsinki*
Leander, *Court scholar*
Hanswurst, *Court fool*
A Groom of the Chamber
The Cook
Lorenz
Barthel } *Peasant brothers*
Gottlieb
Hinze, a tom-cat
A Tavern-keeper
Kunz
Michel } *Peasants*
A Bugbear
A Peace-maker
The Playwright
A Soldier
Two Hussars
Two Lovers
Servants
Musicians
A Peasant
The Prompter
A Shoemaker
A Historian
Fischer
Müller
Bötticher
Leutner
Wiesener
Wiesener's neighbor
Elephants
Lions
Bears
An officer
Eagles and other birds
A rabbit
Partridges
Jupiter
Terkaleon
The Machinist
Spirits
Monkeys
The Public.

Vogel von Vogelstein

LUDWIG TIECK

PROLOGUE

THE scene is laid in the pit, the candles are already lighted, the musicians are gathered in the orchestra. The theatre is filled, people talking in confusion, some arriving, etc.

FISCHER, MÜLLER, SCHLOSSER, BÖTTICHER, *in the pit*

FISCHER. Say, but I am curious, Herr Müller, what do you think of today's play?

MÜLLER. I should be more likely to expect the sky to fall in than to see such a play at our theatre.

FISCHER. Do you know the play?

MÜLLER. Not at all. A strange title that: *Puss in Boots.* I do hope they're not going to present that child's play at the theatre.

SCHLOSS. Why, is it an opera?

FISCHER. Anything but that; the bill says: *A Fairy-tale for Children.*

SCHLOSS. A fairy-tale? But in Heaven's name, we're not children, are we, that they want to present such pieces for us? They certainly won't put an actual cat on the stage, will they?

FISCHER. It may turn out to be an imitation of the new Arcadians, a sort of Terkaleon.

MÜLLER. Now that wouldn't be bad, for I've been wishing this long while to see some time such a wonderful opera without music.

FISCHER. Without music it is absurd, for, my dear friend, we're beyond such childish nonsense, such superstition; enlightenment has borne its natural fruits.

MÜLLER. It may turn out to be a regular picture of domestic life, and the cat is only a joke, something like a jest, so to speak, a motive, if I may call it that.

Schloss. To tell you my honest opinion, I take the whole thing to be a trick to spread sentiment among the people, give them suggestions. You'll see if I'm not right. A revolutionary play, as far as I can understand.

Fischer. I agree with you, too, for otherwise the style would be horribly offensive. For my part I must admit I never could believe in witches or spirits, not to mention *Puss in Boots.*

Schloss. The age of these phantoms is past. Why, there comes Leutner; perhaps he can tell us more. [*Leutner pushes himself through the crowd.*]

Leutner. Good evening, good evening! Well, how are you?

Müller. Do tell us, will you, what sort of play we're having tonight? [*The music begins.*]

Leutner. So late already? Why, I've come in the nick of time. About the play? I have just been speaking with the author; he is at the theatre and helping dress the tom-cat.

Many voices. Is helping? — The author? — The cat? So a cat will appear, after all?

Leutner. Yes, indeed, why his name is even on the bill.

Fischer. I say, who's playing that part?

Leutner. The strange actor, of course, the great man.

Müller. Indeed? But how can they possibly play such nonsense?

Leutner. For a change, the author thinks.

Fischer. A fine change, why not Bluebeard too, and Prince Kobold? Indeed! Some excellent subjects for the drama!

Müller. But how are they going to dress the cat?—And I wonder whether he wears real boots?

Leutner. I am just as impatient as all of you.

Fischer. But shall we really have such stuff played to us? We've come here out of curiosity, to be sure, but still we have taste.

MÜLLER. I feel like making a noise.

LEUTNER. It's rather cold, too. I'll make a start. (*He stamps with his feet, the others fall in.*)

WIESENER (*on the other side*). What does this pounding mean?

LEUTNER. That's to rescue good taste.

WIESENER. Well, then I won't be the last, either. (*He stamps.*)

VOICES. Be quiet, or you can't hear the music. (*All are stamping.*)

SCHLOSS. But, I say, we really ought to let them go through the play, for, after all, we've given our money anyhow; afterward we'll pound so they'll hear us out doors.

ALL. No, now, now — taste — rules — art — otherwise everything will go to ruin.

A CANDLE-SNUFFER. Gentlemen, shall the police be sent in?

LEUTNER. We have paid, we represent the public, and therefore we will have our own good taste and no farces.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (*behind the scenes*). The play will begin immediately.

MÜLLER. No play — we want no play — we want good taste ——

ALL. Good taste! good taste!

PLAYWR. I am puzzled — what do you mean, if I may ask?

SCHLOSS. Good taste! Are you an author and don't even know what good taste means?

PLAYWR. Consider a young beginner ——

SCHLOSS. We want to know nothing about beginners — we want to see a decent play — a play in good taste!

PLAYWR. What sort? What kind?

MÜLLER. Domestic stories — elopements — brothers and sisters from the country — something like that.

[*The Author comes out from behind the curtain.*]

PLAYWR. Gentlemen ——

ALL. Is that the author?

FISCHER. He doesn't look much like an author.

SCHLOSS. Impertinent fellow!

MÜLLER. His hair isn't even trimmed.

PLAYWR. Gentlemen — pardon my boldness.

FISCHER. How can you write such plays? Why haven't you trained yourself?

PLAYWR. Grant me just one minute's audience before you condemn me. I know that the honorable public must pass judgment on the author, and that from them there is no appeal, but I know the justice of an honorable public, and I am assured they will not frighten me away from a course in which I so need their indulgent guidance.

FISCHER. He doesn't talk badly.

MÜLLER. He's more courteous than I thought.

SCHLOSS. He has respect for the public, after all.

PLAYWR. I am ashamed to present to such illustrious judges the modest inspiration of my Muse; it is only the skill of our actors which still consoles me to some extent, otherwise I should be sunk in despair without further ado.

FISCHER. I am sorry for him.

MÜLLER. A good fellow!

PLAYWR. When I heard your worthy stamping — nothing has ever frightened me so, I am still pale and trembling and do not myself comprehend how I have attained to the courage of thus appearing before you.

LEUTNER. Well, clap, then! (*All clap.*)

PLAYWR. I wanted to make an attempt to furnish amusement by means of humor, by cheerfulness and real jokes, and hope I have been successful, since our newest plays so seldom afford us an opportunity to laugh.

Permission Velhagen & Klasing, Bielefeld and Leipzig MORITZ VON SCHWIND

PUSS IN BOOTS

Müller. That's certainly true!

Leutner. He's right—that man.

Schloss. Bravo! Bravo!

All. Bravo! Bravo! (*They clap.*)

Playwr. I leave you, honored sirs, to decide now whether my attempt is to be rejected entirely—trembling, I withdraw, and the play will begin. (*He bows very respectfully and goes behind the curtain.*)

All. Bravo! Bravo!

Voices from the gallery. *Da capo!*——

[*All are laughing. The music begins again; meanwhile the curtain rises.*]

ACT I

Small room in a peasant's cottage

Lorenz, Barthel, Gottlieb. The tom-cat **Hinze,** *is lying on a bench by the stove.*

Lorenz. I think that after the death of our father, our little fortune can be divided easily. You know the deceased has left only three pieces of property—a horse, an ox, and that cat there. I, as the eldest, will take the horse; Barthel, second after me, gets the ox, and so the cat is naturally left for our youngest brother.

Leutner (*in the pit*). For Heaven's sake! Did any one ever see such an exposition! Just see how far dramatic art has degenerated!

Müller. But I understand everything perfectly well.

Leutner. That's just the trouble, you should give the spectator a cunning suggestion, not throw the matter right into his teeth.

Müller. But now you know, don't you, where you are?

Leutner. Yes, but you certainly mustn't know that so quickly; why, the very best part of the fun consists in getting at it little by little.

BARTHEL. I think, brother Gottlieb, you will also be satisfied with this division; unfortunately you are the youngest, and so you must grant us some privileges.

GOTTLIEB. Yes, to be sure.

SCHLOSS. But why doesn't the court of awards interfere in the inheritance? What improbabilities!

LORENZ. So then we're going now, dear Gottlieb; farewell, don't let time hang heavy on your hands.

GOTTLIEB. Good-bye. [*Exit the brothers.*]

GOTTLIEB (*alone*). They are going away — and I am alone. We all three have our lodgings. Lorenz, of course, can till the ground with his horse, Barthel can slaughter and pickle his ox and live on it a while — but what am I, poor unfortunate, to do with my cat? At the most, I can have a muff for the winter made out of his fur, but I think he is even shedding it now. There he lies asleep quite comfortably — poor Hinze! Soon we shall have to part. I am sorry I brought him up, I know him as I know myself — but he will have to believe me, I cannot help myself, I must really sell him. He looks at me as though he understood. I could almost begin to cry.

[*He walks up and down, lost in thought.*]

MÜLLER. Well, you see now, don't you, that it's going to be a touching picture of family life? The peasant is poor and without money; now, in the direst need, he will sell his faithful pet to some susceptible young lady, and in the end that will be the foundation of his good fortune. Probably it is an imitation of Kotzebue's *Parrot;* here the bird is replaced by a cat and the play runs on of itself.

FISCHER. Now that it's working out this way, I am satisfied too.

HINZE, the tom-cat (*rises, stretches, arches his back, yawns, then speaks*). My dear Gottlieb — I really sympathize with you.

GOTTLIEB (*astonished*). What, puss, you are speaking?

THE CRITICS (*in the pit*). The cat is talking? What does that mean, pray?

FISCHER. It's impossible for me to get the proper illusion here.

MÜLLER. Rather than let myself be disappointed like this I never want to see another play all my life.

HINZE. Why should I not be able to speak, Gottlieb?

GOTTLIEB. I should not have suspected it; I never heard a cat speak in all my life.

HINZE. Because we do not join in every conversation, you think we're nothing but dogs.

GOTTLIEB. I think your only business is to catch mice.

HINZE. If we had not, in our intercourse with human beings, got a certain contempt for speech, we could all speak.

GOTTLIEB. Well, I'll own that! But why don't you give any one an opportunity to discover you?

HINZE. That's to avoid responsibility, for if once the power of speech were inflicted on us so-called animals, there wouldn't be any joy left in the world. What isn't the dog compelled to do and learn! The horse! They are foolish animals to show their intelligence, they must give way entirely to their vanity; we cats still continue to be the freest race because, with all our skill, we can act so clumsily that human beings quite give up the idea of training us.

GOTTLIEB. But why do you disclose all this to me?

HINZE. Because you are a good, a noble man, one of the few who take no delight in servility and slavery; see, that is why I disclose myself to you completely and fully.

GOTTLIEB (*gives him his hand*). Good friend!

HINZE. Human beings labor under the delusion that the only remarkable thing about us is that instinctive purring which arises from a certain feeling of comfort; for that reason they often stroke us awkwardly and then we usually purr to secure ourselves against blows. But if they knew how to manage us in the right way, believe me, they would accustom our good nature to everything, and Michel, your neighbor's tom-cat, would even at times be pleased to jump through a hoop for the king.

GOTTLIEB. You're right in that.

HINZE. I love you, Master Gottlieb, very much. You have never stroked me the wrong way, you have let me sleep when I felt like it, you have objected whenever your brothers wanted to take me up, to go with me into the dark, and see the so-called electrical sparks — for all this I now want to show my gratitude.

GOTTLIEB. Noble-hearted Hinze! Ah, how unjustly do they speak ill of you and scornfully, doubting your loyalty and devotion! My eyes are being opened — how my knowledge of human nature is increasing and so unexpectedly!

FISCHER. Friends, where has our hope for a picture of family life gone to?

LEUTNER. Why it is almost too nonsensical.

SCHLOSS. I feel as though I were in a dream.

HINZE. You are a good man, Master Gottlieb; but, do not take it ill of me, you are somewhat narrow, confined — to speak out freely, not one of the best heads.

GOTTLIEB. Alas, no!

HINZE. You don't know now, for example, what you want to do.

GOTTLIEB. You read my thoughts perfectly.

HINZE. If you had a muff made out of my fur——

GOTTLIEB. Do not take it amiss, comrade, that this idea just passed through my mind.

HINZE. Why, no, it was an altogether human thought. Can you think of no way of managing?

GOTTLIEB. Not a thing!

HINZE. You might carry me around and show me for money; but that is never a sure means of support.

GOTTLIEB. No.

HINZE. You might publish a journal or a German paper, with the motto, *Homo sum*—or a novel; I should be willing to collaborate with you—but that is too much bother.

GOTTLIEB. Yes.

HINZE. Well, I'll see that I take even better care of you. Depend upon it, you are yet to become very happy through me.

GOTTLIEB. O, best, most noble man. (*He embraces him tenderly.*)

HINZE. But you must also trust me.

GOTTLIEB. Entirely. Why, now I realize your honorable spirit.

HINZE. Well, then, do me a favor and bring the shoemaker immediately to take my measure for a pair of boots.

GOTTLIEB. The shoemaker? Boots?

HINZE. You are surprised, but in accomplishing what I intend to do for you, I have to walk and run so much that I have to wear boots.

GOTTLIEB. But why not shoes?

HINZE. Master Gottlieb, you do not understand the matter; they must lend me some dignity, an imposing air, in short, a certain manliness to which one never attains in shoes.

GOTTLIEB. Well, as you think best; but the shoemaker will be surprised.

HINZE. Not at all; we must act only as if it were nothing remarkable that I should wish to wear boots; one gets used to everything.

GOTTLIEB. Yes, indeed; why, my conversation with you has actually become quite easy! But another thing; now that we have become such good friends, do call me by my first name, too; why do you still want to stand on ceremony with me?

HINZE. As you like, Gottlieb.

GOTTLIEB. There's the shoemaker passing. Hey! Pst! Friend Leichdorn! Will you please stop a moment? [*The shoemaker comes in.*]

SHOEMAK. God bless you! What's the news?

GOTTLIEB. I have ordered no work from you for a long time.

SHOEMAK. No, my friend, all in all, I have very little to do now.

GOTTLIEB. I should like to have another pair of boots made ——

SHOEMAK. Please take a seat. I have a measure with me.

GOTTLIEB. Not for myself, but for my young friend there.

SHOEMAK. For this one here? Very well.

HINZE (*sits on a chair and holds out his right leg*).

SHOEMAK. Now how should you like it, pussy?

HINZE. In the first place, good soles, then brown flaps, and, above all things, stiff.

SHOEMAK. Very well. (*He takes the measure.*) Will you be so kind as to draw your claws in a bit — or rather nails? I have already scratched myself. (*He takes the measure.*)

HINZE. And they must be finished quickly. (*As his leg is being stroked he begins to purr involuntarily.*)

SHOEMAK. The pussy is comfortable.

Gottlieb. Yes, he's a good-humored fellow. He has just come from school, what they usually call a "smarty."

Shoemak. Well, good-bye. [*Exit.*]

Gottlieb. Wouldn't you perhaps like to have your whiskers trimmed too?

Hinze. On no account, I look so much more respectable, and you certainly must know that cats immediately become unmanly after that. A tomcat without whiskers is but a contemptible creature.

Gottlieb. If I only knew what you are planning!

Hinze. You'll find out in due time. Now I want to take a little walk on the roofs; there's a fine, open view there and you're likely to catch a dove too.

Gottlieb. As a good friend, I want to warn you not to let yourself be caught at it.

Hinze. Don't worry, I'm not a novice. Meanwhile, good-bye. [*Exit.*]

Gottlieb (*alone*). Natural history always says that cats cannot be trusted and that they belong to the lion family, and I am in such fearful dread of a lion. Now if the cat had no conscience, he could run away from me afterward with the boots for which I must now give my last penny and then sell them somewhere for nothing, or it's possible that he wants to make a bid for favor with the shoemaker and then go into his service. But he has a tom-cat already. No, Hinze, my brothers have betrayed me, and now I will try my luck with you. He spoke so nobly, he was so touched — there he sits on the roof yonder, stroking his whiskers — forgive me, my fine friend, that I could even for a moment doubt your magnanimity. [*Exit.*]

Fischer. What nonsense!

Müller. What does the cat need those boots for? — to be able to walk better? Silly stuff!

Schloss. But it seems as though I saw a cat before me.

Leutner. Be still, the scene is changing.

Hall in the royal palace

The King *with crown and sceptre. The* Princess, *his daughter*

King. A thousand handsome princes, my precious daughter, have already sued for your hand and laid their kingdoms at your feet, but you have continued to refuse them. Tell us the reason for this, my treasure.

Princess. My most gracious father, I have always believed that my heart must first feel certain emotions before my neck would bow under the yoke of marriage. For a marriage without love, they say, is truly hell upon earth.

King. That is right, my dear daughter. Ah, indeed, indeed, have you spoken words of truth: a hell on earth! Alas, if only I were not qualified to discuss it! Indeed I should have preferred to remain ignorant! But as it is, dear treasure, I have my tale to tell, as they say. Your mother, my consort of blessed memory — ah, Princess, see, the tears rush to my eyes even in my old age — she was a good queen, she wore the crown with an indescribable air of majesty — but she gave me very little peace. Well, may her ashes rest in peace among her royal relatives.

Princess. Your majesty excites yourself too much.

King. When the memory of it returns to me, O my child, on my knees I would entreat you — do be careful in marrying! It is a great truth that linen and a bridegroom must not be bought by candle-light, a truth which should be found in every book. What did I suffer! No day passed without a quarrel; I could not sleep peacefully, could not conduct my administrative business quietly, I could not think of anything, could not read a book — I was always interrupted. And still my spirit sometimes yearns for you, my blessed Klothilde! My eyes smart — I am a real old fool.

PRINCESS (*tenderly*). My father!

KING. I tremble to think of the dangers that face you, for, even if you do fall in love now, my daughter, ah! you should just see what thick books wise men have filled on this subject — see, your very passion, then, can also make you miserable. The happiest, the most blissful emotion can ruin us; moreover, love is, as it were, a magic cup; instead of nectar we often drink poison; then our pillow is wet with tears; all hope, all consolation are gone. (*The sound of a trumpet is heard.*) Why, it isn't dinner-time yet, is it? Probably another new prince who wants to fall in love with you. Take care, my daughter; you are my only child, and you do not realize how near my heart your happiness lies. (*He kisses her and leaves the hall. Applause is heard in the pit.*)

FISCHER. That's a scene for you, in which you can find sound common sense.

SCHLOSS. I am also moved.

MÜLLER. He's an excellent sovereign.

FISCHER. Now he didn't exactly have to appear with a crown.

SCHLOSS. It entirely spoils the sympathy one feels for him as an affectionate father.

THE PRINCESS (*alone*). I do not understand at all; why, not one of the princes has yet touched my heart with love. I always keep in mind my father's warnings; he is a great sovereign and nevertheless a good father too, and is always thinking of my happiness; if only he did not have such a hasty temper! But fortune and misfortune are always coupled thus. My joy I find in the arts and sciences, for books constitute all my happiness.

The PRINCESS. LEANDER, *the court scholar.*

LEANDER. Well, your Royal Highness! (*They sit down.*)

PRINCESS. Here, Master Leander, is my essay. I have entitled it *Thoughts at Night.*

LEANDER (*reads*). Excellent! Inspired! Ah! I feel as though I hear the hour of midnight striking. When did you write it?

PRINCESS. Yesterday noon, after dinner.

LEANDER. Beautifully conceived! Truly, beautifully conceived! But with your most gracious permission! *The moon shines sadly down in the world.* If you will not take it amiss, it should read: *into the world.*

PRINCESS. Very well, I will note that for the future; it's too stupid that poetry should be made so hard for us; one can't write five or six lines without making a mistake.

LEANDER. That's the obstinacy of language, so to speak.

PRINCESS. Are not the emotions tenderly and delicately phrased!

LEANDER. Indescribably! It is scarcely comprehensible how a feminine mind could write such a thing.

PRINCESS. Now I might try my hand at moonlight descriptions. Don't you think so?

LEANDER. Naturally you keep going farther all the time; you keep rising higher.

PRINCESS. I have also begun a piece: *The Unhappy Misanthrope; or, Lost Peace and Restored Innocence!*

Leander. Even the title itself is fascinating.

Princess. And then I feel an incomprehensible desire within me to write some horrible ghost story. As I said before, if it were not for those grammatical errors!

Leander. Do not worry about that, incomparable princess! They are easily corrected.

[*Groom from the Chamber enters.*]

Groom. The Prince of Malsinki, who has just arrived, wishes to wait on your royal highness.

[*Exit.*]

Leander. Your obedient servant. [*Exit.*]

Prince Nathaniel *of Malsinki. The* King

King. Here, Prince, is my daughter, a young, simple creature, as you see her before you. (*Aside.*) Be polite, my daughter, courteous; he is an illustrious prince from afar; his country is not even on my map, I have already looked it up; I have an amazing amount of respect for him.

Princess. I am glad to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance.

Nathan. Beautiful Princess, the report of your beauty has been spread so widely over the whole world that I have come here from a far distant corner for the happiness of seeing you face to face.

King. Indeed it is astonishing, how many countries and kingdoms there are! You would not believe how many thousand crown-princes have been here already, to pay their addresses to my daughter; sometimes they arrive by dozens, especially when the weather is fine — and now you have come all the way from — I beg your pardon, topography is such a very extensive subject — in what region does your country lie?

Nathan. Mighty king, if you travel from here first down the great highway, then you turn to the right and go on; but when you reach a mountain, turn to the left again, then you go to the ocean and sail directly north (if the wind is favorable, of course), and so, if the journey is successful, you reach my dominions in a year and a half.

King. The deuce! I must have my court scholar explain that to me. You are probably a neighbor of the North Pole or Zodiac, or something like that, I suppose!

Nathan. Not that I know of.

King. Perhaps somewhere near the savages?

Nathan. I beg your pardon, all my subjects are very tame.

King. But you must live confoundedly far away. I can't get a clear idea of it yet.

Nathan. The geography of my country is still not exactly fixed; I expect to discover more every day; and then it may easily come about that we shall even become neighbors in the end.

King. That will be splendid! And if, after all, a few countries still stand in our way, I will help you in your discoveries. My neighbor is not a good friend of mine, so to speak, and he has a fine country; all the raisins come from there; why, I should be only too glad to have it! But another thing; do tell me, how, living so far away, can you speak our language so fluently!

Nathan. Hush!

King. What?

Nathan. Hush! hush!

King. I do not understand.

Nathaniel (*softly to him*). Do be quiet about it, pray, for otherwise the audience down there will surely notice that it is really very unnatural.

KING. It doesn't matter. They clapped before and so I can afford to take a chance.

NATHAN. You see, it is only for the sake of the drama that I speak your language; for otherwise, of course, the matter is incomprehensible.

KING. Ah, so! Well, come, Prince, the table is set!

[*The* PRINCE *escorts the princess out, the* KING *precedes.*]

FISCHER. Cursed improbabilities there are in this play!

SCHLOSS. And the king doesn't remain at all true to his character.

LEUTNER. Why, nothing but the natural should ever be presented on the stage! The prince should speak an altogether unknown language and have an interpreter with him; the princess should make grammatical errors, since she herself admits that she writes incorrectly.

MÜLLER. Of course! Of course! The whole thing is unquestionable nonsense; the author himself is always forgetting what he has said the moment before.

The scene is laid in front of a tavern

LORENZ, KUNZ, MICHEL *are sitting on a bench. The* HOST

LORENZ. I shall have to be going again soon! I still have a long way home,

HOST. You are a subject of the king, aren't you?

LORENZ. Yes, indeed; what do you call your good ruler?

HOST. He is just called Bugbear.

LORENZ. That is a foolish title. Why, has he no other name?

HOST. When he has edicts issued, they always read: For the good of the public, the *Law* demands — hence I believe that is his real name. All petitions, too, are always laid before the *Law*. He is a fearful man.

Lorenz. Still, I should rather be under a king; why, a king is more dignified. They say the Bugbear is a very ungracious master.

Host. He is not especially gracious, that is true of course, but, on the other hand, he is justice itself. Cases are even sent to him from abroad and he must settle them.

Lorenz. They say wonderful things about him; the story goes he can transform himself into any animal.

Host. It is true, and then he travels around *incognito* and spies out the sentiments of his subjects; that's the very reason why we trust no cat, no strange dog or horse, because we always think the ruler might probably be inside of them.

Lorenz. Then surely we are in a better position, too. Our king never goes out without wearing his crown, his cloak, and his sceptre; by these, he is known three hundred paces away. Well, take care of yourselves. [*Exit.*]

Host. Now he is already in his own country.

Kunz. Is the border line so near?

Host. Surely, that very tree belongs to the king; you can see from this very spot everything that goes on in his country; this border line here is a lucky thing for me. I should have been bankrupt long ago if the deserters from over there had not supported me; almost every day several come.

Michel. Is the service there so hard?

Host. Not that; but running away is so easy, and just because it is so strictly forbidden the fellows get such an exceptional desire to desert. Look, I bet that's another one coming!

[*A soldier comes running.*]

Soldier. A can of beer, host! Quick!

Host. Who are you?

Soldier. A deserter.

MICHEL. Perhaps 'twas his love for his parents which made him desert. Poor fellow, do take pity on him, host.

HOST. Why if he has money, there won't be any lack of beer. (*Goes into the house.*)

[*Two hussars come riding and dismount.*]

1ST HUSS. Well, thank God, we've got so far! Your health, neighbor!

SOLDIER. This is the border.

2D HUSS. Yes, Heaven be thanked! Didn't we have to ride for the sake of that fellow? Beer, host!

HOST (*with several glasses*). Here, gentlemen, a fine, cool drink; you are all pretty warm.

1ST HUSS. Here, you rascal! To your health!

SOLDIER. Best thanks, I will meantime hold your horses for you.

2D HUSS. The fellow can run! It's good that the border is never so very far away; for otherwise it would be deucedly hard service.

1ST HUSS. Well, we must go back, I suppose. Good-bye, deserter! Much luck on your way!

[*They mount and ride away.*]

HOST. Will you stay here?

SOLDIER. No, I am going away; why I must enlist with the neighboring duke.

HOST. Say, come and see me when you desert again.

SOLDIER. Certainly. Farewell!

[*They shake hands. Exeunt soldier and guests, exit host into the house. The curtain falls.*]

INTERLUDE

FISCHER. Why, it's getting wilder and wilder! What was the purpose of the last scene, I wonder?

LEUTNER. Nothing at all, it is entirely superfluous; only to introduce some new nonsense. The theme of the cat is now lost entirely and there is no fixed point of view at all.

SCHLOSS. I feel exactly as though I were intoxicated.

MÜLLER. I say, in what period is the play supposed to be taking place? The hussars, of course, are a recent invention.

SCHLOSS. We simply shouldn't bear it, but stamp hard. Now we haven't the faintest idea of what the play is coming to.

FISCHER. And no love, either! Nothing in it for the heart, for the imagination.

LEUTNER. As soon as any more of that nonsense occurs, for my part at least, I'll begin to stamp.

WIESENER (*to his neighbor*). I like the play now.

NEIGHBOR. Very fine, indeed, very fine; a great man, the author; he has imitated the *Magic Flute* well.

WIESENER. I liked the hussars particularly well; people seldom take the risk of bringing horses on the stage — and why not? They often have more sense than human beings. I would rather see a good horse than many a human being in the more modern plays.

NEIGHBOR. The Moors in Kotzebue — a horse is after all nothing but another kind of Moor.

WIESENER. Do you not know to what regiment the hussars belonged?

NEIGHBOR. I did not even look at them carefully. Too bad they went away so soon — indeed I'd rather like to see a whole play with nothing but hussars. I like the cavalry so much.

LEUTNER (*to* BÖTTICHER). What do you think of all this?

BÖTTICH. Why, I simply can't get the excellent acting of the man who plays the cat out of my head. What a study! What art! What observation! What costuming!

SCHLOSS. That is true; he really does look like a large tom-cat.

BÖTTICH. And just notice his whole mask, as I would rather call his costume, for since he has so completely disguised his natural appearance, this expression is far more fitting. But I say, God bless the ancients when blessing is due. You probably do not know that the ancients acted all parts, without exception, in masks, as you will find in *Athenæus, Pollux* and others. It is hard, you see, to know all these things so accurately, because one must now and then look up those books oneself to find them. At the same time, however, one then has the advantage of being able to quote them. There is a difficult passage in Pausanias.

FISCHER. You were going to be kind enough to speak of the cat.

BÖTTICH. Why, yes; and I only meant to say all the preceding by the way, hence I beg you most earnestly to consider it as a note; and, to return to the cat, have you noticed, I wonder, that he is not one of those black cats? No, on the contrary, he is almost entirely white and has only a few black spots; that expresses his good-nature excellently; moreover, the theme of the whole play, all the emotions to which it should appeal, are suggested in this very fur.

LEUTNER. That is true.

FISCHER. The curtain is going up again!

ACT II

Room in a peasant's house

GOTTLIEB, HINZE. *Both are sitting at a small table and eating*

GOTTLIEB. Did it taste good?

HINZE. Very good, very fine.

GOTTLIEB. But now my fate must soon be determined, for otherwise I do not know what I am to do.

HINZE. Just have patience a few days longer; why, good fortune must have some time to grow; who would expect to become happy all of a sudden, so to speak? My good man, that happens only in books; in the world of reality things do not move so quickly.

FISCHER. Now just listen, the cat dares to speak of the world of reality! I feel almost like going home, for I'm afraid I shall go mad.

LEUTNER. It looks almost as if that is what the writer intended.

MÜLLER. A splendid kind of artistic enjoyment, to be mad, I must admit!

GOTTLIEB. If I only knew, dear Hinze, how you have come by this amount of experience, this intelligence!

HINZE. Are you, then, under the impression that it is in vain one lies for days at the stove with one's eyes tight shut? I always kept studying there quietly. In secret and unobserved does the power of the intelligence grow; hence it is a sign that one has made the least progress when one sometimes has a mind to crane one's neck around as far as possible, so as to look back at the ground one has already covered. Now do be kind enough to untie my napkin.

GOTTLIEB (*does it*). A blessing on good food! (*They kiss.*) Content yourself with that.

HINZE. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

GOTTLIEB. The boots fit very nicely, and you have a charming little foot.

HINZE. That is only because we always walk on our toes, as you must already have read in your natural history.

GOTTLIEB. I have great respect for you — on account of the boots.

HINZE (*hangs a soldier's knapsack about his neck*). I am going now. See, I have also made myself a bag with a drawing-string.

GOTTLIEB. What's it all for?

HINZE. Just let me alone! I want to be a hunter. Why, where is my cane?

GOTTLIEB. Here.

HINZE. Well, then, good-bye. [*Exit.*]

GOTTLIEB. A hunter? I can't understand the man. [*Exit.*]

Open Field

HINZE (*with cane, knapsack, and bag*). Splendid weather! It's such a beautiful, warm day; afterward I must lie down a bit in the sun. (*He spreads out his bag.*) Well, fortune, stand by me. Of course, when I think that this capricious goddess of fortune so seldom favors shrewdly laid plans, that she always ends up by disgracing the intelligence of mortals, I feel as though I should lose all my courage. Yet, be quiet, my heart; a kingdom is certainly worth the trouble of working and sweating some for it! If only there are no dogs around here; I can't bear those creatures at all; it is a race that I despise because they so willingly submit to the lowest servitude to human beings. They can't do anything but either fawn or bite; they haven't fashionable manners at all, a thing which is so necessary in company. There's no game to be caught. (*He begins to sing a hunting song: "I steal through the woods so still and wild," etc. A nightingale in the bush near-by begins to sing.*) She sings gloriously, the songstress of the grove; but how delicious she must taste! The great people of the earth are, after all, right lucky in the fact that they can eat as many nightingales and larks as they like; we poor common people must content ourselves with their singing, with the beauty in nature, with the incomprehensibly sweet harmony. It's a shame I can't hear anything sing without getting a desire to eat it. Nature! Nature! Why do you always destroy my finest emotions by having created me thus? I feel almost like taking off my boots and softly climbing up that tree yonder; she must be perching there. (*Stamping in the pit.*) The nightingale is good-natured not to let herself be interrupted even by this martial music; she must taste delicious; I am forgetting all about my hunting with these sweet dreams. Truly, there's no game to be caught. Why, who's there?

[*Two lovers enter.*]

HE. I say, my sweet life, do you hear the nightingale?

SHE. I am not deaf, my good friend.

HE. How my heart overflows with joyousness when I see all harmonious nature thus gathered about me, when every tone but reëchoes the confession of my love, when all heaven bows down to diffuse its ether over me.

SHE. You are raving, my dear!

HE. Do not call the most natural emotions of my heart raving. (*He kneels down.*) See, I swear to you, here in the presence of glad heaven ——

HINZE (*approaching them courteously*). Kindly pardon me — would you not take the trouble to go somewhere else? You are disturbing a hunt here with your lovely affection.

HE. Be the sun my witness, the earth — and what else? Thou, thyself, dearer to me than earth, sun, and all the elements. What is it, good friend?

HINZE. The hunt — I beg most humbly.

He. Barbarian, who are you, to dare to interrupt the oaths of love? You are not of woman born, you belong outside humanity.

Hinze. If you would only consider, sir——

She. Then wait just a second, good friend; you see, I'm sure, that my lover, lost in the intoxication of the moment, is down on his knees.

He. Dost thou believe me now?

She. Oh, didn't I believe you even before you spoke a word? (*She bends down to him affectionately.*) Dearest! I love you! Oh, inexpressibly!

He. Am I mad? Oh, and if I am not, why do I not become so immediately with excess of joy, wretched, despicable creature that I am? I am no longer on the earth; look at me well, dearest, and tell me: Am I not perhaps standing in the sun?

She. You are in my arms, and they shall never release you either.

He. Oh, come, this open field is too narrow for my emotions, we must climb the highest mountain, to tell all nature how happy we are.

[*Exit the lovers, quickly and full of delight. Loud applause and bravos in the pit.*]

Wiesener (*clapping*). The lover thoroughly exhausted himself. Oh, my, I gave myself such a blow on the hand that it swelled right up.

Neighbor. You do not know how to restrain yourself when you are glad.

Wiesener. Yes, I am always that way.

Fischer. Ah!—that was certainly something for the heart; that makes one feel good again!

Leutner. Really beautiful diction in that scene!

Müller. But I wonder whether it is essential to the whole?

SCHLOSS. I never worry about the whole; if I cry, I cry — that's enough; that was a divine passage.

HINZE. Such a pair of lovers is good for something in the world after all; they have fallen plump into the poetical again down there and the stamping has ceased. There's no game to be caught. (*A rabbit creeps into the bag; he rushes over and draws the strings over him.*) Look here, good friend! A kind of game that is a cousin of mine, so to speak; yes, that's the way with the world nowadays, relatives against relatives, brother against brother; if one wants to get through the world oneself, one must push others out of the way. (*He takes the rabbit out of the bag and puts it into the knapsack.*) Hold! Hold! — truly I must take care not to devour the game myself. I must just tie up the knapsack quickly only to be able to restrain my passion. Fie! for shame, Hinze! Is it not the duty of the nobleman to sacrifice himself and his desires to the happiness of his brother creatures? That's the reason why we live, and whoever cannot do that — oh, it were better for him if he had never been born! (*He is on the point of withdrawing; violent applause and shouting of "Encore;" he has to repeat the last beautiful passage, then he bows respectfully and goes off with the rabbit.*)

FISCHER. Oh, what a noble man!

MÜLLER. What a beautifully human state of mind!

SCHLOSS. One can still be benefited by things like this, but when I see such nonsense I should like to smash it with a single blow.

LEUTNER. I began to feel quite sad too — the nightingale — the lovers — the last tirade — why the play has some really beautiful passages after all!

Hall in the palace

Large company. The King. *The* Princess. *Prince* Nathaniel. *The* Cook (*in gala costume*)

King (*sitting on throne*). Over here, cook; now is the time to speak and answer; I want to examine the matter myself.

Cook (*falls on his knees*). May it please your majesty to express your commands for your highness's most faithful servant?

King. One cannot expend too much effort, my friends, in keeping a king — on whose shoulders lies the well-being of a whole country and that of innumerable subjects — always in good humor. For if he falls into a bad humor, he very easily becomes a tyrant, a monster; for good humor encourages cheerfulness, and cheerfulness, according to the observations of all philosophers, makes man good; whereas melancholy, on the other hand, is to be considered a vice for the very reason that it encourages all the vices. Whose duty is it, I now ask, in whose power does it so lie, to preserve the good spirits of the monarch, so much as in the hands of a cook? Are not rabbits very innocent animals? My favorite dish — by means of these animals I could succeed in never becoming tired of making my country happy — and these rabbits he lets me do without! Sucking pigs and sucking pigs daily. Rascal, I am disgusted with this at last!

Cook. Let not my king condemn me unheard. Heaven is my witness, that I took all pains to secure those pretty white animals; I even wanted to purchase them at a rather high price, but there are absolutely none to be had. If it were possible to get possession of even one of these rabbits, do you think you would be allowed to doubt for one moment longer the love your subjects bear you?

KING. Stop with those roguish words, betake yourself to the kitchen and show by your action that you love your king. (*Exit cook.*) Now I turn to you, my prince, and to you my daughter. I have been informed, worthy prince, that my daughter does not love you; she is a thoughtless, silly girl, but I still give her credit for so much common sense as probably to have several reasons. She causes me care and sadness, grief and worry, and my old eyes are flooded with tears when I think of how she will get along after my death. "You will be left an old maid," I have told her a thousand times; "take your chance while it is offered you;" but she will not hear; well, then she'll have to be made to feel.

PRINCESS. My father——

KING (*weeping and sobbing*). Go, ungrateful, disobedient girl—by your refusal you are drawing me into—alas, only too early a grave! (*He supports himself on the throne, covers his face with his cloak and weeps bitterly.*)

FISCHER. Why, the king does not remain true to his character for a moment.

[*Groom of the Chamber comes in.*]

GROOM. Your majesty, a strange man is outside and begs to be admitted before your majesty.

KING (*sobbing*). Who is it?

GROOM. I beg pardon, my king, for not being able to answer this question. Judging by his long white beard, one should say he is an old man, and his face completely covered with hair should almost confirm one in this opinion, but then again he has such bright, youthful eyes, such a smooth, flexible back, that one cannot understand him. He appears to be a wealthy man; for he is wearing a pair of fine boots and as far as I can infer from his exterior he seems to be a hunter.

KING. Bring him in; I am curious to see him.

[*Groom goes and returns directly with* HINZE.]

HINZE. With your majesty's most gracious permission the Count of Carabas makes bold to present you with a rabbit.

KING (*delighted*). A rabbit? Do you hear it, really, people? Ah, fate has become reconciled with me again! A rabbit?

HINZE (*takes it out of his knapsack*). Here, great monarch!

KING. Here — just hold the sceptre a moment, prince. (*He feels the rabbit.*) Fat! nice and fat! From the Count of ——

HINZE. Carabas.

KING. Indeed, he must be an excellent man. I must become better acquainted with him. Who is the man? Which of you knows him? Why does he keep himself concealed? If such heads as that are allowed to remain idle, what will become of our throne! I would cry for joy. *Sends me a rabbit!* Groom, give it to the cook directly. [*Groom takes it. Exit.*]

NATHAN. My king, I beg most humbly to make my departure.

KING. Why, indeed! I had almost forgotten that in my joy! Farewell, prince, yes, you must make room for other suitors; it cannot be otherwise. Adieu! I wish you had a highroad all the way home.

[*Prince kisses his hand. Exit.*]

KING (*shouting*). People! Let my historian come!

[*The historian appears.*]

KING. Here, friend, come, here's some material for our history of the world. You have your book with you, of course!

HISTORIAN. Yes, my king.

KING. Now enter immediately, that on such and such a day (whatever date we happen to have to-day) the Count of Carabas sent me a present of a most delicious rabbit.

[HISTORIAN *seats himself and writes.*]

KING. Do not forget, *Anno currentis.* I must think of everything, otherwise it's always sure to be done wrong. (*Blast of a trumpet is heard.*) Ah, dinner is ready — come, my daughter, do not weep; if it isn't one prince, it will be another. Hunter, we thank you for your trouble. Will you accompany us to the dining-room? (*They go,* HINZE *follows.*)

LEUTNER. Pretty soon I shall not be able to stand it any longer; why, what has happened to the father now, who was so tender to his daughter at first and touched us all so?

FISCHER. The only thing that vexes me is that not a person in the play wonders at the cat; the king and all act as though it had to be so.

SCHLOSS. My head is all dizzy with this queer stuff.

Royal dining-room

Large table set. Sound of drums and trumpets. Enter the KING, *the* PRINCESS, LEANDER, HINZE, *several distinguished guests and* JACKPUDDING, *Servants, waiting at the table.*

KING. Let us sit down, otherwise the soup will get cold! Has the hunter been taken care of?

SERVANT. Yes, your majesty, he will eat at the little table here with the court fool.

JACKPUDDING (*to* HINZE). Let us sit down, otherwise the soup will get cold.

HINZE (*sits down*). With whom have I the honor of dining?

JACKPUD. A man is what he is, Sir Hunter; we cannot all do the same thing. I am a poor, exiled fugitive, a man who was once, a long time ago, witty, but who has now become stupid and reentered service in a foreign land where he is again considered witty for a while.

HINZE. From what country do you come?

JACKPUD. Unfortunately, only Germany. My countrymen became so wise about a certain time that they finally forbade all jokes on pain of punishment; wherever I was seen, I was called by unbearable nicknames, such as: Absurd, indecent, bizarre — whoever laughed at me was persecuted like myself, and so I was compelled to go into exile.

HINZE. Poor man!

JACKPUD. There are strange trades in the world, Sir Hunter; cooks live by eating, tailors by vanity, I, by the laughter of human beings; if they cease to laugh I must starve.

[*Murmuring in the pit: A Jackpudding! A Jackpudding!*]

HINZE. I do not eat that vegetable.

JACKPUD. Why? Don't be bashful, help yourself.

HINZE. I tell you, white cabbage does not agree with me.

JACKPUD. It will taste all the better to me. Give me your hand! I must become better acquainted with you, Sir Hunter.

HINZE. Here!

JACKPUD. Take here the hand of an honest German fellow; I am not ashamed of being German, as many of my countrymen are. (*He presses the cat's hand very tightly.*)

HINZE. Ow! Ow! (*He resists, growls, clutches* JACKPUDDING.)

JACKPUD. Oh! Hunter! Are you possessed of the devil? (*He rises and goes to the king weeping.*) Your majesty, the hunter is a perfidious man;

just look at the remembrance of his five fingers he has left on me.

KING (*eating*). Strange! Now sit down again; wear gloves in the future when you give him your hand.

JACKPUD. One must guard against you.

HINZE. Why did you take such a hold on me? The deuce take your pretended honesty!

JACKPUD. Why, you scratch like a cat!

[HINZE *laughs maliciously.*]

KING. But what's the trouble today, anyhow? Why is there no intelligent conversation carried on at the table? I do not enjoy a bite unless my mind has some nourishment too. Court scholar, did you perhaps fall on your head today?

LEANDER (*eating*). May it please your majesty——

KING. How far is the sun from the earth?

LEANDER. Two million four hundred thousand and seventy-one-miles.

KING. And the circle in which the planets revolve?

LEANDER. A hundred thousand million miles.

KING. A hundred thousand million! There's nothing in the world I like better to hear than such great numbers — millions, trillions — that gives you something to think about. It's a good deal, isn't it, a thousand million, more or less?

LEANDER. Human intelligence grows with the numbers.

KING. But tell me, about how large is the whole world in general, counting fixed stars, milky ways, hoods of mist, and all that?

LEANDER. That cannot be expressed at all.

KING. But you are to express it or (*threatening with his sceptre*) ——

LEANDER. If we consider a million as one, then about ten hundred thousand trillions of such units which of themselves amount to a million.

King. Just think, children, think! Would you believe this bit of world could be so great? But how that occupies the mind!

Jackpud. Your majesty, this bowl of rice here seems to me sublimer.

King. How's that, fool?

Jackpud. Such sublimities of numbers give no food for thought; one cannot think, for of course the highest number always finally becomes the smallest again. Why, you just have to think of all the numbers possible. I can never count beyond five here.

King. But say, there's some truth in that. Scholar, how many numbers are there, anyhow?

Leander. An infinite number.

King. Just tell me quickly the highest number.

Leander. There is no highest, because you can always add something to the highest; human intelligence knows no bounds in this respect.

King. But in truth it is a remarkable thing, this human mind.

Hinze. You must get disgusted with being a fool here.

Jackpud. You can introduce nothing new; there are too many working at the trade.

Leander. The fool, my king, can never understand such a thing; on the whole I am surprised that your majesty is still amused by his insipid ideas. Even in Germany they tired of him, and here in Utopia you have taken him up where thousands of the most wonderful and clever amusements are at our service. He should be thrown out at once, for he only brings your taste into bad repute.

King (*throws the sceptre at his head*). Sir Brazenbold of a scholar! What do you dare to say? The fool pleases *me, me,* his king, and if I like him, how dare you say that the man is ridiculous?

You are the court scholar and he the court fool; you both have equal positions; the only difference is that he is dining at the little table with the strange hunter. The fool displays his nonsense at the table, and you carry on an intelligent conversation at the table; both are only to while away the time for me and make my meal taste good: where, then, lies the great difference? Furthermore, it does us good to see a fool who is more stupid than we, who has not the same gifts; why, then, one feels greater oneself and is grateful to heaven; even on that account I like to have a blockhead around.

[THE COOK *serves the rabbit and goes.*]

KING. The rabbit! I do not know — I suppose the other gentlemen do not care for it?

ALL (*bow*).

KING. Well, then, with your permission, I will keep it for myself. (*He eats.*)

PRINCESS. It seems to me the king is making faces as though he were getting an attack again.

KING (*rising in rage*). The rabbit is burned! Oh, earth! Oh, pain! What keeps me from sending the cook right down to Orcus as fast as possible?

PRINCESS. My father!

KING. How did this stranger lose his way among the people? His eyes are dry ——

ALL (*arise very sadly,* JACKPUDDING *runs back and forth busily,* HINZE *remains seated and eats steadily*).

KING. A long, long, good night; no morning will ever brighten it.

PRINCESS. Do have some one fetch the peacemaker.

KING. May the Cook Philip be Hell's cry of jubilee when an ungrateful wretch is burned to ashes!

PRINCESS. Where can the musician be!

KING. To be or not to be ——

[*The peacemaker enters with a set of musical bells and begins to play them at once.*]

KING. What is the matter with me? (*Weeping.*) Alas! I have already had my attack again. Have the rabbit taken out of my sight. (*He lays his head on the table, full of grief, and sobs.*)

COURTIER. His majesty suffers much.

[*Violent stamping and whistling in the pit; they cough, they hiss; those in the gallery laugh; the king gets up, arranges his cloak and sits down majestically with his sceptre. It is all in vain; the noise continues to increase, all the actors forget their parts, a terrible pause on the stage.* HINZE *has climbed up a pillar. The author appears on the stage, overcome.*]

AUTHOR. Gentlemen — most honorable public — just a few words!

IN THE PIT. Quiet! Quiet! The fool wishes to speak!

AUTHOR. For the sake of heaven, do not disgrace me thus; why, the act will be over directly. Just look, the king, too, is again calmed; take an example from this great soul which certainly has more reason to be vexed than you.

FISCHER. More than we?

WIESENER (*to his neighbor*). But I wonder why you are stamping? We two like the play, do we not?

NEIGHBOR. That's true too — absent-mindedly, because they're all doing it. (*Claps with might and main.*)

AUTHOR. A few voices are still favorable to me, however. For pity, do put up with my poor play; a rogue gives more than he has, and it will be over soon, too. I am so confused and frightened that I can think of nothing else to say to you.

ALL. We want to hear nothing, know nothing.

AUTHOR (*raging, drags the peacemaker forward*). The king is calmed, now calm this raging flood too, if you can. (*Beside himself, rushes off.*)

[*The peacemaker plays on his bells, the stamping keeps time with the melody; he motions; monkeys and bears appear and dance fondly around him. Eagles and other birds. An eagle sits on the head of* HINZE *who is very much afraid; two elephants, two lions. Ballet and singing.*]

THE FOUR-FOOTED ANIMALS. That sounds so beautiful!

THE BIRDS. That sounds so lovely!

CHORUS TOGETHER. Never have I seen or heard the like!

[*Hereupon an artistic quadrille is danced by all present, the king and his court retinue are taken into the centre,* HINZE *and* JACKPUDDING *not excluded; general applause. Laughter; people standing up in pit to see better; several hats fall down from the gallery.*]

THE PEACEMAKER (*sings during the ballet and the audience's general expression of pleasure*).

Could only all good men
Soft bells like these discover
Each enemy would then
With ease be turned to lover.
And life without bad friends would be
All sweet and lovely harmony.

[*The curtain falls, all shout and applaud, the ballet is heard awhile.*]

INTERLUDE

WIESENER. Splendid! Splendid!

NEIGHBOR. Well, I'd certainly call that a heroic ballet.

WIESENER. And so beautifully woven into the main plot!

Leutner. Beautiful music!

Fischer. Divine!

Schloss. The ballet is the only redeeming feature of the play.

Böttich. I still keep on admiring the acting of the cat. In such details one recognizes the great and experienced actor; for example, as often as he took the rabbit out of the sack, he always lifted it by the ears; that was not prescribed for him; I wonder whether you noticed how the king grasped it at once by the body? But these animals are held by the ears because that is where they can best bear it. That's what I call a master!

Müller. That is a very fine explanation.

Fischer (*aside*). He himself ought to be lifted by the ears for it.

Böttich. And his terror when the eagle was sitting on his head! How he did not even move for fear, did not stir or budge — it is beyond description!

Müller. You go very deeply into the matter.

Böttich. I flatter myself I am a bit of a connoisseur; that is of course not the case with all of you, and for that reason the matter must be demonstrated to you.

Fischer. You are taking great pains!

Böttich. Oh, when you love art as I do it is a pleasant task! Just now a very acute thought also occurred to me concerning the cat's boots, and in them I admire the genius of the actor. You see, at first he is a cat; for that reason he must lay aside his natural clothing in order to assume the appropriate disguise of a cat. Then he has to appear fully as a hunter; that is what I conclude, for every one calls him that, nor does a soul marvel at him; an unskilful actor would have dressed himself exactly so too, but what would have happened to our illusion? We might perhaps have forgotten that he was still originally a cat and how uncomfortable a new costume would be for the actor over the fur he already had. By means of the boots, however, he merely skilfully suggests the hunter's costume; and that such suggestions are extremely dramatic, the ancients prove to us very excellently, in often ——

FISCHER. Hush! The third act is beginning.

ACT III

Room in a peasant's house

The PLAYWRIGHT. *The* MACHINIST.

MACHIN. Then do you really think that will do any good?

PLAYWR. I beg, I entreat you, do not refuse my request; my only hope depends on it.

LEUTNER. Why, what's this again? How did these people ever get into Gottlieb's room?

SCHLOSS. I won't rack my brains about anything more.

MACHIN. But, dear friend, you certainly do ask too much, to have all this done in such a hurry, entirely on the spur of the moment.

PLAYWR. I believe you are against me, too; you also rejoice in my misfortune.

MACHIN. Not in the least.

PLAYWRIGHT (*falls down before him*). Then prove it to me by yielding to my request; if the disapproval of the audience breaks out so loudly again, then at a motion from me let all the machines play; as it is, the second act has already closed quite differently from the way it reads in my manuscript.

MACHIN. What's this now? Why, who raised the curtain?

PLAYWR. It never rains but it pours! I am lost! (*He rushes in embarrassment behind the scenes.*)

MACHIN. There never has been such a confusion on any evening. [*Exit. A pause.*]

WIESENER. I say, does that belong to the play?

NEIGHBOR. Of course — why that motivates the transformation to follow.

FISCHER. This evening ought certainly to be described in the theatre almanac.

KING (*behind the scenes*). No, I will not appear, on no condition; I cannot bear to have any one laugh at me.

PLAYWR. But you — dearest friend — it can't be changed now.

JACKPUD. Well, I will try my luck. (*He steps forward and bows comically to the audience.*)

MÜLLER. Why, what is Jackpudding doing in the peasant's room now?

SCHLOSS. I suppose he wants to deliver a ridiculous monologue.

JACKPUD. Pardon me if I make bold to say a few words which do not exactly belong to the play.

FISCHER. Oh, you should keep perfectly quiet, we're tired of you even in the play; moreover, now so very ——

SCHLOSS. A Jackpudding dares to talk to us?

JACKPUD. Why not? For if people laugh at me, I am not hurt at all; why, it would be my warmest wish to have you laugh at me. So do not hesitate.

LEUTNER. That is pretty funny!

JACKPUD. Naturally, what scarcely befits the king is all the more fitting for me; hence he would not appear, but left this important announcement to me.

MÜLLER. But we do not wish to hear anything.

JACKPUD. My dear German countrymen ——

SCHLOSS. I believe the setting of the play is in Asia.

JACKPUD. But now, you see, I am talking to you merely as an actor to the spectators.

Schloss. People, it's all over with me now; I am crazy.

Jackpud. Do be pleased to hear that the former scene, which you just saw, is not part of the play at all.

Fischer. Not part of the play? Then how does it get in there?

Jackpud. The curtain was raised too soon. It was a private discussion which would not have taken place on the stage at all if it were not so horribly crowded behind the scenes. Now if you were deceived, it is of course so much the worse; then just be kind enough to eradicate this delusion again; for from now on, do you understand me, only after I have gone away, will the act really begin. Between you and me, all the preceding has nothing to do with it at all. But you are to be compensated; much is coming soon which is very essential to the plot. I have spoken to the playwright myself and he has assured me of it.

Fischer. Yes, your playwright is just the fellow.

Jackpud. He's good for nothing, isn't it so? Well, I am glad after all, that there is still some one else who has the same taste as I——

The Pit. All of us, all of us!

Jackpud. Your obedient servant; it is too great an honor by far. Yes, God knows, he is a wretched writer — only to give a bad example; what a miserable part he has given me! Where, pray, am I witty and funny? I appear in so few scenes, and I believe, if I hadn't stepped forward even now, by a lucky chance, I should not have appeared again at all.

Playwright (*rushing forward*). Impudent fellow——

Jackpud. Look, he is even jealous of the small part I am playing now.

Playwright (*on the other side of the stage with a bow*).

Worthy friends! I never should have dared to give this man a more important part since I know your taste——

JACKPUDDING (*on the other side*). *Your* taste? Now you see his jealousy—and they have all just declared that my taste is the same as theirs.

PLAYWR. I wished, by means of the present play, only to prepare you for even more extravagant products of the imagination.

ALL IN THE PIT. How? What?

JACKPUD. Of course for plays in which I would have no part to act at all.

PLAYWR. For the development of this matter must advance step by step.

JACKPUD. Don't believe a word he says!

PLAYWR. Now I withdraw, not to interrupt the course of the play any longer. [*Exit.*]

JACKPUD. Adieu, until we meet again. (*Exit, returns again quickly.*) *Apropos*—another thing—the discussion which has just taken place among us is not part of the play either. [*Exit.*]

THE PIT (*laughs*).

JACKPUDDING (*returns again quickly*). Let us finish the wretched play today; make believe you do not notice at all how bad it is; as soon as I get home I'll sit down and write one for you that you will certainly like.

[*Exit, some applause.*]

(*Enter* GOTTLIEB *and* HINZE)

GOTTLIEB. Dear Hinze, it is true you are doing much for me, but I still cannot understand what good it is going to do me.

HINZE. Upon my word, I want to make you happy.

GOTTLIEB. Happiness must come soon, very soon, otherwise it will be too late; it is already half past seven and the comedy ends at eight.

HINZE. Say, what the devil does that mean?

Gottlieb. Oh, I was lost in thought — See! I meant to say, how beautifully the sun has risen. The accursed prompter speaks so indistinctly; and then if you want to extemporize once in a while, it always goes wrong.

Hinze (*quietly*). Do bethink yourself, otherwise the whole play will break in a thousand pieces.

Schloss. I wish somebody would tell me why I can no longer understand anything.

Fischer. My intelligence is at a standstill too.

Gottlieb. So my fortune is yet to be determined today?

Hinze. Yes, dear Gottlieb, even before the sun sets. See, I love you so much that I would run through fire for you — and you doubt my sincerity?

Wiesener. Did you hear that? He is going to run through fire. Ah, fine, here we get the scene from the *Magic Flute* too, with the fire and the water!

Neighbor. But cats do not go into the water.

Wiesener. Why so much the greater is the cat's love for his master, you see; that's just what the author wants to make us understand.

Hinze. Now what would you like to become in the world, anyhow?

Gottlieb. Oh, I don't know, myself.

Hinze. Perhaps you'd like to become a prince, or a king?

Gottlieb. That, better than anything.

Hinze. And do you also feel the strength within you to make a nation happy?

Gottlieb. Why not? If only I am once happy myself.

Hinze. Well, then content yourself. I swear to you, you shall mount the throne. [*Exit.*]

Gottlieb. It would have to come about mysteriously — still, of course, so many unexpected things happen in the world. [*Exit.*]

Böttich. Do notice the infinite refinement with which the cat always holds his cane.

FISCHER. You've been a bore to us for the longest while; you are even more tiresome than the play.

SCHLOSS. You even add to the confusion in our heads.

MÜLLER. You talk constantly and do not know what you want.

MANY VOICES. Out! Out! He's a nuisance! (*A crowd;* BÖTTICHER *finds himself compelled to leave the theatre.*)

FISCHER. He with his talk about refinement!

SCHLOSS. He always vexes me when he considers himself a connoisseur.

An open field

HINZE (*with knapsack and bag*). I have become quite accustomed to hunting. Every day I catch partridges, rabbits and the like, and the dear little animals are getting more and more practice in being caught. (*He spreads out his bag.*) Now the season of the nightingales is over, I do not hear a single one singing.

[*Enter the two lovers.*]

HE. Go, you bore me.

SHE. I am disgusted with you.

HE. A fine kind of love!

SHE. Wretched hypocrite, how you have deceived me!

HE. What has become of your infinite tenderness?

SHE. And your faithfulness?

HE. Your rapture?

SHE. Your infatuation?

BOTH. The devil has taken it! That comes of marrying.

HINZE. The hunt has never yet been so disturbed — if you would be pleased to notice that this open field is clearly too confined for your sorrows, and climb up some mountain.

HE. Insolent wretch! (*Boxes* HINZE *on the ear.*)

SHE. Boor! (*Also boxes* HINZE *on the ear.*)

HINZE (*purrs*).

SHE. It seems best to me that we be parted again.

He. I am at your bidding. [*Exit the lovers.*]

Hinze. Nice people, these so-called human beings. Just look, two partridges; I will carry them off quickly. Now, fortune, make haste, for I myself am almost getting impatient. Now I have no longer any desire to eat the partridges. It's probably thus, that, by mere habit, we can implant in our nature every possible virtue. [*Exit.*]

Hall in the Palace

The King *on his throne with the* Princess; Leander *in a lecturer's chair; opposite him* Jackpudding *in another lecturer's chair; in the centre of the hall a costly hat, decorated with gold and precious stones, is fastened on a high pole. The entire court is present.*

King. Never yet has a person rendered such services to his country as this amiable Count of Carabas. Our historian has already almost filled a thick volume, so often has the Count presented me with pretty and delicious gifts, sometimes even twice a day, through his hunter. My appreciation of his kindness is boundless and I desire nothing more earnestly than to find at some time the opportunity of discharging to some extent the great debt I owe him.

Princess. Dearest father, would your majesty not most graciously permit the learned disputation to begin? My heart yearns for this mental activity.

King. Yes, it may begin now. Court scholar — court fool — you both know that to the one who gains the victory in this disputation is allotted that costly hat; for this very reason have I had it set up here, so that you may have it always before your eyes and never be in want of quick wit.

[LEANDER *and* JACKPUDDING *bow.*]

LEANDER. The theme of my assertion is, that a recently published play by the name of *Puss in Boots* is a good play.

JACKPUD. That is just what I deny.

LEANDER. Prove that it is bad.

JACKPUD. Prove that it is good.

LEUTNER. What's this again? Why that's the very play they are giving here, if I am not mistaken.

MÜLLER. No other.

SCHLOSS. Do tell me whether I am awake and have my eyes open.

LEANDER. The play, if not perfectly excellent, is still to be praised in several respects.

JACKPUD. Not one respect.

LEANDER. I assert that it displays wit.

JACKPUD. I assert that it displays none.

LEANDER. You are a fool; how can you pretend to judge concerning wit?

JACKPUD. And you are a scholar; what can you pretend to understand about wit?

LEANDER. Several characters are well-sustained.

JACKPUD. Not a single one.

LEANDER. Then, even if I concede else, the audience is well drawn in it.

JACKPUD. An audience never has a character.

LEANDER. I am almost amazed at this boldness.

JACKPUD (*to the pit*). Isn't he a foolish fellow? Here we are, hand and glove with each other and sympathize in our views on taste, and he wishes to assert in opposition to my opinion, that at least the audience in *Puss in Boots* is well drawn.

FISCHER. The audience? Why no audience appears in the play.

JACKPUD. That's even better! So, then, no audience is presented in it at all?

MÜLLER. Why not a bit of it, unless he means the several kinds of fools that appear.

JACKPUD. Now, do you see, scholar! What these gentlemen down there are saying must certainly be true.

LEANDER. I am getting confused, but still I won't yield the victory to you. [*Enter* HINZE.]

JACKPUD. Sir Hunter, a word! (HINZE *approaches, they whisper.*)

HINZE. If it's nothing more than that. (*He takes off his boots, climbs up the pole, then takes the hat, jumps down, then puts his boots on again.*)

JACKPUD. Victory! Victory!

KING. The deuce! How clever the hunter is!

LEANDER. I only regret that I have been vanquished by a fool, that learning must acknowledge foolishness as its superior.

KING. Keep still; you wanted the hat, he wanted the hat; so again I see no difference. But what have you brought, hunter?

HINZE. The Count of Carabas commends himself most respectfully to your majesty and sends you these two partridges.

KING. Too much! too much! I am sinking under the burden of gratitude! Long since should I have done my duty and visited him; today I will delay no longer. Have my royal carriage prepared at once — eight horses in front — I want to go driving with my daughter. You, Hunter, are to show us the way to the castle of the count. [*Exit with retinue.*]

HINZE. JACKPUDDING

HINZE. What was your disputation about, anyhow?

JACKPUD. I asserted that a certain play, which, moreover, I am not acquainted with at all, *Puss in Boots,* is a wretched play.

HINZE. So?

JACKPUD. Adieu, Sir Hunter. [*Exit.*]

HINZE (*alone*). I'm all in the dumps. I, myself, helped the fool win a victory against a play in which I myself am taking the leading part. Fate! Fate! Into what complications do you so often lead us mortals? But be that as it may. If I only succeed in putting my beloved Gottlieb on the throne, I will gladly forget all my other troubles. The king wishes to visit the count? Now that is another bad situation which I must clear up; now the great, important day has arrived on which I need you so particularly, you boots. Now do not desert me; all must be determined today. [*Exit.*]

FISCHER. Do tell me what this is — the play itself — it appears again as a play in the play.

SCHLOSS. Without much ceremony, I am crazy — didn't I say at once, that is the enjoyment of art which you are said to have here?

LEUTNER. No tragedy has ever affected me as this farce has.

In front of the tavern

THE HOST (*reaping corn with a scythe*). This is hard work! Well, of course people cannot be deserting every day either. I only wish the harvest were over. After all, life consists of nothing but work; now draw beer, then clean glasses, then pour it out — now even reap. Life means work — and here some learned folk are even so wicked, in their books, as to try to put sleep out of fashion, because one does not live enough for one's time. But I am a great friend of sleep. [*Enter* HINZE.]

HINZE. Whoever wants to hear something wonderful, listen to me now! How I have been running!

—first from the royal palace to Gottlieb, second with Gottlieb to the palace of the Bugbear where I left him, third from there back again to the king, fourth I am now racing ahead of the king's coach like a courier and showing him the way. Hey! good friend!

HOST. Who's that? Countryman, you must probably be a stranger, for the people in this neighborhood know that I do not sell any beer about this time; I need it for myself; when one does work like mine, one must also fortify one's self. I am sorry, but I cannot help you.

HINZE. I do not want any beer, I never drink beer; I only want to say a few words to you.

HOST. You must certainly be a regular idler, to attempt to disturb industrious people in their occupation.

HINZE. I do not wish to disturb you. Just listen: the neighboring king will drive by here, he will probably step out of his carriage and inquire to whom these villages belong. If your life is dear to you, if you do not wish to be hanged or burned, then be sure to answer: to the Count of Carabas.

HOST. But, Sir, we are subject to the law.

HINZE. I know that well enough, but, as I said, if you do not wish to die, this region here belongs to the Count of Carabas. [*Exit.*]

HOST. Many thanks! Now this would be the finest kind of opportunity for me to get out of ever having to work again. All I need do is to say to the king—the country belongs to the Bugbear. But no, idleness breeds vice: *Ora et labora* is my motto.

[*A fine carriage with eight horses, many servants behind; it stops; the* KING *and* PRINCESS *step out.*]

PRINCESS. I am somewhat curious to see the Count.

KING. So am I, my daughter. Good day, my friend. To whom do these villages here belong?

HOST (*aside*). He asks as though he were ready to have me hanged at once.— To the Count of Carabas, your majesty.

KING. A beautiful country. But I always thought the country must look altogether different if I should cross the border, judging from the maps. Do help me a bit. (*He climbs up a tree quickly.*)

PRINCESS. What are you doing, my royal father?

KING. I like open views on beautiful landscapes.

PRINCESS. Can you see far?

KING. Oh, yes, and if it were not for those annoying mountains, you would see even further. Oh, my, the tree is full of caterpillars! (*He climbs down again.*)

PRINCESS. That is because it is a scene in nature which has not yet been idealized; imagination must first ennoble it.

KING. I wish you could take the caterpillars off me by means of imagination. But get in, we must drive ahead.

PRINCESS. Farewell, good, innocent peasant. (*They get into the carriage; it drives on.*)

HOST. How the world has changed! If you read in old books or listen to old people's stories, they always got louis d'ors or something like that if they spoke to a king or a prince. Such a king would formerly never dare to open his mouth if he did not press gold pieces into your hand at once. But now! How, pray, is one to make one's fortune unexpectedly, if the chance is over even with kings? Innocent peasant! I wish to God I didn't owe anything — that comes of the new sentimental descriptions of country life. Such a king is powerful and envies people of our station. I must only thank God that he did not hang me. The strange hunter was our Bugbear himself after all. At least it will now appear in the paper, I suppose, that the king has spoken to me graciously. [*Exit.*]

Another region

KUNZ (*reaping corn*). Bitter work! And if at least I were doing it for myself — but this compulsory villainage! Here one must do nothing but sweat for the Bugbear and he does not even thank one. Of course they always say in this world that laws are necessary to keep the people in order, but what need there is here of *our Law* who devours all of us, I cannot understand.

[HINZE *comes running.*]

HINZE. Now I have blisters on my soles already — well, it doesn't matter, Gottlieb, Gottlieb must get the throne for it. Hey, good friend!

KUNZ. Who's *this* fellow?

HINZE. The king will drive by here directly. If he asks you to whom all this belongs, you must answer — to the Count of Carabas; otherwise you will be chopped into a thousand million pieces. For the welfare of the public, the law desires it thus.

FISCHER. For the welfare of the public?

SCHLOSS. Naturally, for otherwise the play would never end.

HINZE. Your life is probably dear to you. [*Exit.*]

KUNZ. That's just how the edicts always sound. Well, I don't mind saying that, if only no new taxes result from it. One must trust no innovation.

[*The coach drives up and stops; the* KING *and the* PRINCESS *step out.*]

KING. A fine landscape, too. We have already seen a great deal of very fine country. To whom does this land belong?

KUNZ. To the Count of Carabas.

KING. He has splendid estates, that must be true — and so near mine; daughter, that seems to be a good match for you. What is your opinion?

PRINCESS. You embarrass me, my father. What new things one sees while traveling, though. Do tell me, pray, good peasant, why do you cut down the straw like that?

KUNZ (*laughing*). Why, this is the harvest, Mam'selle Queen — the corn.

KING. Corn? What do you use that for, pray?

KUNZ (*laughing*). Bread is baked from that.

KING. Pray, daughter, for heaven's sake, bread is baked of it! Who would ever think of such tricks! Nature is something marvelous, after all. Here, good friend, get a drink, it is warm today. (*He steps in again with the* PRINCESS; *the carriage drives away.*)

KUNZ. If he wasn't a king, you'd almost think he was stupid. Doesn't know what corn is! Well, you learn new things every day, of course. Here he has given me a shining piece of gold and I'll fetch myself a can of good beer at once. [*Exit.*]

Another part of the country, beside a river

GOTTLIEB. Now here I've been standing two hours already, waiting for my friend, Hinze. And he's not coming yet. There he is! But how he's running — he seems all out of breath.

[HINZE *comes running.*]

HINZE. Well, friend Gottlieb, take off your clothes quickly?

GOTTLIEB. My clothes?

HINZE. And then jump into the water here ——

GOTTLIEB. Into the water?

HINZE. And then I will throw the clothing into the bush——

GOTTLIEB. Into the bush?

HINZE. And then you are provided for!

GOTTLIEB. I agree with you; if I am drowned and my clothes gone, I am well enough provided for.

HINZE. There is no time for joking——

GOTTLIEB. I am not joking at all. Is that what I had to wait here for?

HINZE. Undress!

GOTTLIEB. Well, I'll do anything to please you.

HINZE. Come, you are only to take a little bath. (*Exit with* GOTTLIEB. *Then he comes back with the clothing which he throws into a bush.*) Help! Help! Help!

[*The carriage. The* KING *looks out of the coach door.*]

KING. What is it, Hunter? Why do you shout so?

HINZE. Help, your majesty, the Count of Carabas is drowned!

KING. Drowned!

PRINCESS (*in the carriage*). Carabas!

KING. My daughter in a faint! The Count drowned!

HINZE. Perhaps he can still be saved; he is lying there in the water.

KING. Servants! Try everything, anything to preserve the noble man.

SERVANT. We have rescued him, your majesty.

HINZE. Misfortune upon misfortune, my king! The Count was bathing here in the clear water and a rogue stole his clothing.

KING. Unstrap my trunk at once—give him some of my clothes. Cheer up, daughter, the Count is rescued.

HINZE. I must hurry. [*Exit.*]

GOTTLIEB (*in the king's clothing*). Your majesty——

KING. Here is the Count! I recognize him by my clothing! Step in, my best friend — how are you? Where do you get all the rabbits? I cannot compose myself for joy! Drive on, coachman!

[*The carriage drives off quickly.*]

SERVANT. None but the hangman could come up so quickly — now I have the pleasure of running behind on foot, and besides I'm just as wet as a cat.

LEUTNER. How many more times, pray, will the carriage appear?

WIESENER. Neighbor! Why, you are asleep!

NEIGHBOR. Not at all — a fine play.

Palace of the Bugbear

The BUGBEAR *appears as a rhinoceros; a poor peasant stands before him*

PEASANT. May it please your honor ——

BUGBEAR. There must be justice, my friend.

PEASANT. I cannot pay just now.

BUGBEAR. Be still, you have lost the case; the law demands money and your punishment; consequently your land must be sold. There is nothing else to be done and this is for the sake of justice.

[*Exit peasant.*]

BUGBEAR (*who is re-transformed into an ordinary bugbear*). These people would lose all respect if they were not compelled to fear in this way.

[*An officer enters, bowing profusely.*]

OFFICER. May it please you, honored sir — I ——

BUGBEAR. What's your trouble, my friend?

OFFICER. With your kindest permission, I tremble and quiver in your honor's formidable presence.

BUGBEAR. Oh, this is far from my most terrible form.

OFFICER. I really came — in matters — to beg you to take my part against my neighbor. I had also brought this purse with me — but the presence of Lord Law is too frightful for me.

BUGBEAR (*suddenly changes into a mouse and sits in a corner*).

OFFICER. Why, where has the Bugbear gone?

BUGBEAR (*in a delicate voice*). Just put the money down there on the table; I will sit here to avoid frightening you.

OFFICER. Here. (*He lays the money down.*) Oh, this justice is a splendid thing — how can one be afraid of such a mouse! [*Exit.*]

BUGBEAR (*assumes his natural form*). A pretty good purse — of course one must sympathize with human weakness. [*Enter* HINZE.]

HINZE. With your permission — (*aside*) Hinze, you must pluck up courage — (*aloud*) Your Excellency!

BUGBEAR. What do you wish?

HINZE. I am a scholar traveling through this region and wished to take the liberty of making your excellency's acquaintance.

BUGBEAR. Very well, then, make my acquaintance.

HINZE. You are a mighty prince; your love of justice is known all over the world.

BUGBEAR. Yes, I don't doubt it. Do sit down!

HINZE. They tell many wonderful things about Your Highness ——

BUGBEAR. Yes, people always want something to talk about and so the reigning monarchs must be the first to be discussed.

HINZE. But still, there is one thing I cannot believe, that Your Excellency can transform yourself into an elephant and a tiger.

BUGBEAR. I will give you an example of it at once. (*He changes into a lion.*)

HINZE (*draws out a portfolio, trembling*). Permit me to make note of this marvel — but now would you also please resume your natural charming form? Otherwise I shall die of fear.

BUGBEAR (*in his own form*). Those are tricks, friend! Don't you think so?

HINZE. Marvelous! But another thing — they also say you can transform yourself into very small animals — with your permission, that is even far more incomprehensible to me; for, do tell me, what becomes of your large body then?

BUGBEAR. I will do that too.

[*He changes into a mouse.* HINZE *leaps after him, the Bugbear flees into another room,* HINZE *after him.*]

HINZE (*coming back*). Freedom and Equality! The Law is devoured! Now indeed the Tiers — *Etat!* Gottlieb will surely secure the government.

SCHLOSS. Why, a revolutionary play after all? Then for heaven's sake, you surely shouldn't stamp!

[*The stamping continues,* WIESENER *and several others applaud,* HINZE *creeps into a corner and finally even leaves the stage. The playwright is heard quarreling behind the scenes and then enters.*]

PLAYWR. What am I to do? The play will be over directly — everything would perhaps have run smoothly — now just in this moral scene I had expected so much applause. If this were only not so far away from the king's palace, I would fetch the peacemaker; he explained to me at the end of the second act all the fables of Orpheus — but am I not a fool? I became quite confused — why, this is the theatre here, and the peacemaker must be somewhere behind the scenes — I will look for him — I must find him — he shall save me! (*Exit, returns again quickly.*) He is not *there*, Sir Peacemaker! An empty echo mocks me — he has deserted me, his playwright. Ha! there I see him — he must come forward.

[*The pauses are always filled by stamping in the pit and the playwright delivers this monologue in recitative, so that the effect is rather melodramatic.*]

PEACEMAKER (*behind the scenes*). No, I will not appear.

PLAYWR. But why not, pray?

PEACEMAK. Why, I have already undressed.

PLAYWR. That doesn't matter. (*He pushes him forward by force.*)

PEACEMAKER (*appearing in his ordinary dress, with the set of bells*). Well, you may take the responsibility. (*He plays on the bells and sings.*)

These sacred halls of beauty
Revenge have never known.
For love guides back to duty
The man who vice has sown.
Then he is led by friendly hand,
Glad and content, to a better land.

[*The pit begins to applaud; meanwhile the scene is changed, the fire and water taken from the* MAGIC FLUTE *begin to play, above appears the open temple of the sun, the sky is clear and Jupiter sits within it, beneath Hell with Terkaleon, cobalds and witches on the stage, many lights, etc. The audience applauds excessively, everything is astir.*]

WIESENER. Now the cat has only to go through fire and water and then the play is finished.

[*Enter the* KING, *the* PRINCESS, GOTTLIEB, HINZE *and servants.*]

HINZE. This is the palace of the Count of Carabas. Why, the dickens, how this has changed!

KING. A beautiful palace!

HINZE. As long as matters *have* gone thus far (*taking Gottlieb by the hand*) you must first walk through the fire here and then through the water there.

GOTTLIEB (*walks through fire and water to the sound of flute and drum.*)

HINZE. You have stood the test; now, my prince, you are altogether worthy of the government.

GOTTLIEB. Governing, Hinze, is a curious matter.

KING. Accept, now, the hand of my daughter.

PRINCESS. How happy I am!

GOTTLIEB. I, likewise. But, my king, I would desire to reward my servant.

KING. By all means; I herewith raise him to the nobility. (*He hangs an order about the cat's neck.*) What is his actual name?

GOTTLIEB. Hinze. By birth he is of but a lowly family—but his merits exalt him.

LEANDER (*quickly stepping forward*).

After the King I rode with due submission,
And now implore his Majesty's permission
To close with laudatory lines poetic
This play so very wondrous and prophetic.
In praise of cats my grateful anthem soars—
The noblest of those creatures on all fours
Who daily bring contentment to our doors.
In Egypt cats were gods, and very nice is
The Tom-cat who was cousin to Great Isis.
They still protect our cellar, attic, kitchen,
And serve the man who this world's goods is rich in.
Our homes had household gods of yore to grace them.
If cats be gods, then with the Lares place them!

[*Drumming. The curtain falls.*]

FAIR ECKBERT (1796)

By Ludwig Tieck

TRANSLATED BY PAUL B. THOMAS

IN a region of the Hartz Mountains there lived a knight whom people generally called simply Fair Eckbert. He was about forty years old, scarcely of medium height, and short, very fair hair fell thick and straight over his pale, sunken face. He lived very quietly unto himself, and was never implicated in the feuds of his neighbors; people saw him but rarely outside the encircling wall of his little castle. His wife loved solitude quite as much as he, and both seemed to love each other from the heart; only they were wont to complain because Heaven seemed unwilling to bless their marriage with children.

Very seldom was Eckbert visited by guests, and even when he was, almost no change on their account was made in the ordinary routine of his life. Frugality dwelt there, and Economy herself seemed to regulate everything. Eckbert was then cheerful and gay — only when he was alone one noticed in him a certain reserve, a quiet distant melancholy.

Nobody came so often to the castle as did Philip Walther, a man to whom Eckbert had become greatly attached, because he found in him very much his own way of thinking. His home was really in Franconia, but he often spent more than half a year at a time in the vicinity of Eckbert's castle, where he busied himself gathering herbs and stones and arranging them in order. He had a small income, and was therefore dependent upon no one. Eckbert often accompanied him on his lonely rambles, and thus a closer friendship developed between the two men with each succeeding year.

There are hours in which it worries a man to keep from a friend a secret, which hitherto he has often taken great pains to conceal. The soul then feels an irresistible impulse to impart itself completely, and reveal its innermost self to the friend, in order to make him so much the more a friend. At these moments delicate souls disclose themselves to each other, and it doubtless sometimes happens that the one shrinks back in fright from its acquaintance with the other.

One foggy evening in early autumn Eckbert was sitting with his friend and his wife, Bertha, around the hearth-fire. The flames threw a bright glow out into the room and played on the ceiling above. The night looked in darkly through the windows, and the trees outside were shivering in the damp cold. Walther was lamenting that he had so far to go to get back home, and Eckbert proposed that he remain there and spend half the night in familiar talk, and then sleep until morning in one of the rooms of the castle. Walther accepted the proposal, whereupon wine and supper were brought in, the fire was replenished with wood, and the conversation of the two friends became more cheery and confidential.

After the dishes had been cleared off, and the servants had gone out, Eckbert took Walther's hand and said:

" Friend, you ought once to let my wife tell you the story of her youth, which is indeed strange enough."

" Gladly," replied Walther, and they all sat down again around the hearth. It was now exactly midnight, and the moon shone intermittently through the passing clouds.

" You must forgive me," began Bertha, " but my husband says your thoughts are so noble that it is not right to conceal anything from you. Only you must not regard my story as a fairy-tale, no matter how strange it may sound.

" I was born in a village, my father was a poor shepherd. The household economy of my parents was on a humble plane — often they did not know where they were going to get their bread. But what grieved me far more than that was the fact that my father and mother often quarreled over their poverty, and cast bitter reproaches at each other. Furthermore I was constantly hearing about myself, that I was a simple, stupid child, who could not perform even the most trifling task. And I was indeed extremely awkward and clumsy; I let everything drop from my hands, I learned neither to sew nor to spin, I could do nothing to help about the house. The misery of my parents, however, I understood extremely well. I often used to sit in the corner and fill my head with notions — how I would help them if I should suddenly become rich, how I would shower them with gold and silver and take delight in their astonishment. Then I would see spirits come floating up, who would reveal subterranean treasures to me or give me pebbles which afterward turned into gems. In short, the most wonderful fantasies would occupy my mind, and when I had to get up to help or carry something, I would show myself far more awkward than ever, for the reason that my head would be giddy with all these strange notions.

"My father was always very cross with me, because I was such an absolutely useless burden on the household; so he often treated me with great cruelty, and I seldom heard him say a kind word to me. Thus it went along until I was about eight years old, when serious steps were taken to get me to do and to learn something. My father believed that it was sheer obstinacy and indolence on my part, so that I might spend my days in idleness. Enough — he threatened me unspeakably, and when this turned out to be of no avail, he chastised me most barbarously, adding that this punishment was to be repeated every day because I was an absolutely useless creature.

"All night long I cried bitterly — I felt so entirely forsaken, and I pitied myself so that I wanted to die. I dreaded the break of day, and did not know what to do. I longed for any possible kind of ability, and could not understand at all why I was more stupid than the other children of my acquaintance. I was on the verge of despair.

"When the day dawned, I got up, and, scarcely realizing what I was doing, opened the door of our little cabin. I found myself in the open field, soon afterward in a forest, into which the daylight had hardly yet shone. I ran on without looking back; I did not get tired, for I thought all the time that my father would surely overtake me and treat me even more cruelly on account of my running away.

"When I emerged from the forest again the sun was already fairly high, and I saw, lying ahead of me, something dark, over which a thick mist was resting. One moment I was obliged to scramble over hills, the next to follow a winding path between rocks. I now guessed that I must be in the neighboring mountains, and I began to feel afraid of the solitude. For, living in the plain, I had never seen any mountains, and the mere word mountains, whenever I heard them talked about, had an exceedingly terrible sound to my childish ear. I hadn't the heart to turn back — it was indeed precisely my fear which drove me onwards. I often looked around me in terror when the wind rustled through the leaves above me, or when a distant sound of chopping rang out through the quiet morning. Finally, when I began to meet colliers and miners and heard a strange pronunciation, I nearly fainted with fright.

"You must forgive my prolixity. As often as I tell this story I involuntarily become garrulous, and Eckbert, the only person to whom I have told it, has spoiled me by his attention.

"I passed through several villages and begged, for I now felt hungry and thirsty. I helped myself along very well with the answers I gave to questions asked me. I had wandered along in this way for about four days, when I came to a small foot-path which led me farther from the highway. The rocks around me now assumed a different, far stranger shape. They were cliffs, and were piled up on one another in such a way that they looked as if the first gust of wind would hurl them all together into a heap. I did not know whether to go on or not. I had always slept over night either in out-of-the-way shepherds' huts, or else in the open woods, for it was just then the most beautiful season of the year. Here I came across no human habitations whatever, nor could I expect to meet with any in this wilderness. The rocks became more and more terrible — I often had to pass close by dizzy precipices, and finally even the path under my feet came to an end. I was absolutely wretched; I wept and screamed, and my voice echoed horribly in the rocky glens. And now night set in; I sought out a mossy spot to lie down on, but I could not sleep. All night long I heard the most peculiar noises; first I thought it was wild beasts, then the wind moaning through the rocks, then again strange birds. I prayed, and not until toward morning did I fall asleep.

"I woke up when the daylight shone in my face. In front of me there was a rock. I climbed up on it, hoping to find a way out of the wilderness, and perhaps to see some houses or people. But when I reached the top, everything, as far as my eye could see, was like night about me — all overcast with a gloomy mist. The day was dark and dismal, and not a tree, not a meadow, not even a thicket could my eye discern, with the exception of a few bushes which, in solitary sadness, had shot up through the crevices in the rocks. It is impossible to describe the longing I felt merely to see a human being, even had it been the most strange-looking person before whom I should inevitably have taken fright. At the same time I was ravenously hungry. I sat down and resolved to die. But after a while the desire to live came off victorious; I got up quickly and walked on all day long, occasionally crying out. At last I was scarcely conscious of what I was doing; I was tired and exhausted, had hardly any desire to live, and yet was afraid to die.

"Toward evening the region around me began to assume a somewhat more friendly aspect. My thoughts and wishes took new life, and the desire to live awakened in all my veins. I now thought I heard the swishing of a mill in the distance; I redoubled my steps, and how relieved, how joyous I felt when at last I actually reached the end of the dreary rocks! Woods and meadows and, far ahead, pleasant mountains lay before me again. I felt as if I had stepped out of hell into paradise; the solitude and my helplessness did not seem to me at all terrible now.

"Instead of the hoped-for mill, I came upon a water-fall, which, to be sure, considerably diminished my joy. I dished up some water from the river with my hand and drank. Suddenly I thought I heard a low cough a short distance away. Never have I experienced so pleasant a surprise as at that moment; I went nearer and saw, on the edge of the forest, an old woman, apparently resting. She was dressed almost entirely in black; a black hood covered her head and a large part of her face. In her hand she held a walking-stick.

"I approached her and asked for help; she had me sit down beside her and gave me bread and some wine. While I was eating she sang a hymn in a shrill voice, and when she had finished she said that I might follow her.

"I was delighted with this proposal, strange as the voice and the personality of the old woman seemed to me. She walked rather fast with her cane, and at every step she distorted her face, which at first made me laugh. The wild rocks steadily receded behind us — we crossed a pleasant meadow, and then passed through a fairly long forest. When we emerged from this, the sun was just setting, and I shall never forget the view and the feelings of that evening. Everything was fused in the most delicate red and gold; the tree-tops stood forth in the red glow of evening, the charming light was spread out over the fields, the forest and the leaves of the trees were motionless, the clear sky looked like an open paradise, and the evening bells of the villages rang out with a strange mournfulness across the lea. My young soul now got its first presentment of the world and its events. I forgot myself and my guide; my spirit and my eyes were wandering among golden clouds.

"We now climbed a hill, which was planted with birch-trees, and from its summit looked down into a little valley, likewise full of birches. In the midst of the trees stood a little hut. A lively barking came to our ears, and presently a spry little dog was dancing around the old woman and wagging his tail. Presently he came to me, examined me from all sides, and then returned with friendly actions to the old woman.

"When we were descending the hill I heard some wonderful singing, which seemed to come from the hut. It sounded like a bird, and ran:

O solitude
Of lonely wood,
Where none intrude,
Thou bringest good
For every mood,
O solitude!

"These few words were repeated over and over; if I were to attempt to describe the effect, it was somewhat like the blended notes of a bugle and a shawm.

"My curiosity was strained to the utmost. Without waiting for the old woman's invitation, I walked into the hut with her. Dusk had already set in. Everything was in proper order; a few goblets stood in a cupboard, some strange-looking vessels lay on a table, and a bird was hanging in a small, shiny cage by the window. And he, indeed, it was that I had heard singing. The old woman gasped and coughed, seemingly as if she would never get over it. Now she stroked the little dog, now talked to the bird, which answered her only with its usual words. Furthermore, she acted in no way as if I were present. While I was thus watching her, a series of shudders passed through my body; for her face was constantly twitching and her head shaking, as if with age, and in such a way that it was impossible for one to tell how she really looked.

"When she finally ceased coughing she lighted a candle, set a very small table, and laid the supper on it. Then she looked around at me and told me to take one of the woven cane chairs. I sat down directly opposite her, and the candle stood between us. She folded her bony hands and prayed aloud, all the time twitching her face in such a way that it almost made me laugh. I was very careful, however, not to do anything to make her angry.

"After supper she prayed again, and then showed me to a bed in a tiny little side-room — she herself slept in the main room. I did not stay awake long, for I was half dazed. I woke up several times during the night, however, and heard the old woman coughing and talking to the dog, and occasionally I heard the bird, which seemed to be dreaming and sang only a few isolated words of its song. These stray notes, united with the rustling of the birches directly in front of my window, and also with the song of the far-off nightingale, made such a strange combination that I felt all the time, not as if I were awake, but as if I were lapsing into another, still stranger, dream.

"In the morning the old woman woke me up and soon afterward gave me some work to do; I had, namely, to spin, and I soon learned how to do it; in addition I had to take care of the dog and the bird. I was not long in getting acquainted with the housekeeping, and came to know all the objects around. I now began to feel that everything was as it should be; I no longer thought that there was anything strange about the old woman, or romantic about the location of her home, or that the bird was in any way extraordinary. To be sure, I was all the time struck by his beauty; for his feathers displayed every possible color, varying from a most beautiful light blue to a glowing red, and when he sang he puffed himself out proudly, so that his feathers shone even more gorgeously.

"The old woman often went out and did not return until evening. Then I would go with the dog to meet her and she would call me child and daughter. Finally I came to like her heartily; for our minds, especially in childhood, quickly accustom themselves to everything. In the evening hours she taught me to read; I soon learned the art, and afterward it was a source of endless pleasure to me in my solitude, for she had a few old, hand-written books which contained wonderful stories.

"The memory of the life I led at that time still gives me a strange feeling even now. I was never visited by any human being, and felt at home only in that little family circle; for the dog and the bird made the same impression on me which ordinarily only old and intimate friends create. Often as I used it at that time, I have never been able to recall the dog's strange name.

"In this way I had lived with the old woman for four years, and I must have been at any rate about twelve years old when she finally began to grow more confidential and revealed a secret to me. It was this: every day the bird laid one egg, and in this egg there was always a pearl or a gem. I had already noticed that she often did something in the cage secretly, but had never particularly concerned myself about it. She now charged me with the task of taking out these eggs during her absence, and of carefully preserving them in the vessels. She would leave food for me and stay away quite a long time — weeks and months. My little spinning-wheel hummed, the dog barked, the wonderful bird sang, and meanwhile everything was so quiet in the region round about that I cannot recall a single high wind or a thunder-storm during the entire time. Not a human being strayed thither, not a wild animal came near our habitation. I was happy, and sang and worked away from one day to the next. Man would perhaps be right happy if he could thus spend his entire life, unseen by others.

"From the little reading that I did I formed quite wonderful impressions of the world and of mankind. They were all drawn from myself and the company I lived in; thus, if whimsical people were spoken of I could not imagine them other than the little dog, beautiful women always looked like the bird, and all old women were as my wonderful old friend. I had also read a little about love, and in my imagination I figured in strange tales. I formed a mental picture of the most beautiful knight in the world and adorned him with all sorts of excellences, without really knowing, after all my trouble, what he looked like. But I could feel genuine pity for myself if he did not return my love, and then I would make long, emotional speeches to him, sometimes aloud, in order to win him. You smile — we are all now past this period of youth.

"I now liked it rather better when I was alone, for I was then myself mistress of the house. The dog was very fond of me and did everything I wanted him to do, the bird answered all my questions with his song, my wheel was always spinning merrily, and so in the bottom of my heart I never felt any desire for a change. When the old woman returned from her wanderings she would praise my diligence, and say that her household was conducted in a much more orderly manner since I belonged to it. She was delighted with my development and my healthy look. In short, she treated me in every way as if I were a daughter.

"'You are a good child,' she once said to me in a squeaky voice. 'If you continue thus, it will always go well with you. It never pays to swerve from the right course — the penalty is sure to follow, though it may be a long time coming.' While she was saying this I did not give a great deal of heed to it, for I was very lively in all my movements. But in the night it occurred to me again, and I could not understand what she had meant by it. I thought her words over carefully — I had read about riches, and it finally dawned on me that her pearls and gems might perhaps be something valuable. This idea presently became still clearer to me — but what could she have meant by the right course? I was still unable to understand fully the meaning of her words.

"I was now fourteen years old. It is indeed a misfortune that human beings acquire reason, only to lose, in so doing, the innocence of their souls. In other words I now began to realize the fact that it depended only upon me to take the bird and the gems in the old woman's absence, and go out into the world of which I had read. At the same time it was perhaps possible that I might meet my wonderfully beautiful knight, who still held a place in my imagination.

"At first this thought went no further than any other, but when I would sit there spinning so constantly, it always came back against my will and I became so deeply absorbed in it that I already saw myself dressed up and surrounded by knights and princes. And whenever I would thus lose myself, I easily grew very sad when I glanced up and found myself in my little, narrow home. When I was about my business, the old woman paid no further attention to me.

"One day my hostess went away again and told me that she would be gone longer this time than usual — I should pay strict attention to everything, and not let the time drag on my hands. I took leave of her with a certain uneasiness, for I somehow felt that I should never see her again. I looked after her for a long time, and did not myself know why I was so uneasy; it seemed almost as if my intention were already standing before me, without my being distinctly conscious of it.

"I had never taken such diligent care of the dog and the bird before — they lay closer to my heart than ever now. The old woman had been away several days when I arose with the firm purpose of abandoning the hut with the bird and going out into the so-called world. My mind was narrow and limited; I wanted again to remain there, and yet the thought was repugnant to me. A strange conflict took place in my soul — it was as if two contentious spirits were struggling within me. One moment the quiet solitude would seem so beautiful to me, and then again I would be charmed by the vision of a new world with its manifold wonders.

"I did not know what to do with myself. The dog was continually dancing around me with friendly advances, the sunlight was spread out cheerfully over the fields, and the green birch-trees shone brightly. I had a feeling as if I had something to do requiring haste. Accordingly, I caught the little dog, tied him fast in the room, and took the cage, with the bird in it, under my arm. The dog cringed and whined over this unusual treatment; he looked at me with imploring eyes but I was afraid to take him with me. I also took one of the vessels, which was filled with gems, and concealed it about me. The others I left there. The bird twisted its head around in a singular manner when I walked out of the door with him; the dog strained hard to follow me, but was obliged to remain behind.

" I avoided the road leading toward the wild rocks, and walked in the opposite direction. The dog continued to bark and whine, and I was deeply touched by it. Several times the bird started to sing, but, as he was being carried, it was necessarily rather difficult for him. As I walked along the barking grew fainter and fainter, and, finally, ceased altogether. I cried and was on the point of turning back, but the longing to see something new drove me on.

" I had already traversed mountains and several forests when evening came, and I was obliged to pass the night in a village. I was very timid when I entered the public-house; they showed me to a room and a bed, and I slept fairly well, except that I dreamt of the old woman, who was threatening me.

" My journey was rather monotonous; but the further I went the more the picture of the old woman and the little dog worried me. I thought how he would probably starve to death without my help, and in the forest I often thought I would suddenly meet the old woman. Thus, crying and sighing, I wandered along, and as often as I rested and put the cage on the ground, the bird sang its wonderful song, and reminded me vividly of the beautiful home I had deserted. As human nature is prone to forget, I now thought that the journey I had made as a child was not as dismal as the one I was now making, and I wished that I were back in the same situation.

"I had sold a few gems, and now, after wandering many days, I arrived in a village. Even as I was entering it, a strange feeling came over me — I was frightened and did not know why. But I soon discovered why — it was the very same village in which I was born. How astonished I was! How the tears of joy ran down my cheeks as a thousand strange memories came back to me! There were a great many changes; new houses had been built, others, which had then only recently been erected, were now in a state of dilapidation. I came across places where there had been a fire. Everything was a great deal smaller and more crowded than I had expected. I took infinite delight in the thought of seeing my parents again after so many years. I found the little house and the well-known threshold — the handle on the door was just as it used to be. I felt as if I had only yesterday left it ajar. My heart throbbed vehemently. I quickly opened the door — but faces entirely strange to me stared at me from around the room. I inquired after the shepherd, Martin, and was told that both he and his wife had died three years before. I hurried out and, crying aloud, left the village.

"I had looked forward with such pleasure to surprising them with my riches, and as a result of a remarkable accident the dream of my childhood had really come true. And now it was all in vain — they could no longer rejoice with me — the fondest hope of my life was lost to me forever.

"I rented a small house with a garden in a pleasant city, and engaged a waiting-maid. The world did not appear to be such a wonderful place as I had expected, but the old woman and my former home dropped more and more out of my memory, so that, upon the whole, I lived quite contentedly.

"The bird had not sung for a long time, so that I was not a little frightened one night when he suddenly began again. The song he sang, however, was different — it was:

O solitude
Of lonely wood,
A vanished good
In dreams pursued,
In absence rued,
O solitude!

"I could not sleep through the night; everything came back to my mind, and I felt more than ever that I had done wrong. When I got up the sight of the bird was positively repugnant to me; he was constantly staring at me, and his presence worried me. He never ceased singing now, and sang more loudly and shrilly than he used to. The more I looked at him the more uneasiness I felt. Finally, I opened the cage, stuck my hand in, seized him by the neck and squeezed my fingers together forcibly. He looked at me imploringly, and I relaxed my grip — but he was already dead. I buried him in the garden.

"And now I was often seized with fear of my waiting-maid. My own past came back to me, and I thought that she too might rob me some day, or perhaps even murder me. For a long time I had known a young knight whom I liked very much — I gave him my hand, and with that, Mr. Walther, my story ends."

"You should have seen her then," broke in Eckbert quickly. "Her youth, her innocence, her beauty — and what an incomprehensible charm her solitary breeding had given her! To me she seemed like a wonder, and I loved her inexpressibly. I had no property, but with the help of her love I attained my present condition of comfortable prosperity. We moved to this place, and our union thus far has never brought us a single moment of remorse."

"But while I have been chattering," began Bertha again, "the night has grown late. Let us go to bed."

She rose to go to her room. Walther kissed her hand and wished her a good-night, adding:

"Noble woman, I thank you. I can readily imagine you with the strange bird, and how you fed the little Strohmi."

Without answering she left the room. Walther also lay down to sleep, but Eckbert continued to walk up and down the room.

"Aren't human beings fools?" he finally asked himself. "I myself induced my wife to tell her story, and now I regret this confidence! Will he not perhaps misuse it? Will he not impart it to others? Will he not perhaps — for it is human nature — come to feel a miserable longing for our gems and devise plans to get them and dissemble his nature?"

It occurred to him that Walther had not taken leave of him as cordially as would perhaps have been natural after so confidential a talk. When the soul is once led to suspect, it finds confirmations of its suspicions in every little thing. Then again Eckbert reproached himself for his ignoble distrust of his loyal friend, but he was unable to get the notion entirely out of his mind. All night long he tossed about with these thoughts and slept but little.

Bertha was sick and could not appear for breakfast. Walther seemed little concerned about it, and furthermore he left the knight in a rather indifferent manner. Eckbert could not understand his conduct. He went in to see his wife — she lay in a severe fever and said that her story the night before must have excited her in this manner.

After that evening Walther visited his friend's castle but rarely, and even when he did come he went away again after a few trivial words. Eckbert was exceedingly troubled by this behavior; to be sure, he tried not to let either Bertha or Walther notice it, but both of them must surely have been aware of his inward uneasiness.

Bertha's sickness grew worse and worse. The doctor shook his head — the color in her cheeks had disappeared, and her eyes became more and more brilliant.

One morning she summoned her husband to her bedside and told the maids to withdraw.

"Dear husband," she began, "I must disclose to you something which has almost deprived me of my reason and has ruined my health, however trivial it may seem to be. Often as I have told my story to you, you will remember that I have never been able, despite all the efforts I have made, to recall the name of the little dog with which I lived so long. That evening when I told the story to Walther he suddenly said to me when we separated: 'I can readily imagine how you fed the little Strohmi.' Was that an accident? Did he guess the name, or did he mention it designedly? And what, then, is this man's connection with my lot? The idea has occurred to me now and then that I merely imagine this accident — but it is certain, only too certain. It sent a feeling of horror through me to have a strange person like that assist my memory. What do you say, Eckbert?"

Eckbert looked at his suffering wife with deep tenderness. He kept silent, but was meditating. Then he said a few comforting words to her and left the room. In an isolated room he walked back and forth with indescribable restlessness — Walther for many years had been his sole male comrade, and yet this man was now the only person in the world whose existence oppressed and harassed him. It seemed to him that his heart would be light and happy if only this one person might be put out of the way. He took down his cross-bow with a view to distracting his thoughts by going hunting.

It was a raw and stormy day in the winter; deep snow lay on the mountains and bent down the branches of the trees. He wandered about, with the sweat oozing from his forehead. He came across no game, and that increased his ill-humor. Suddenly he saw something move in the distance — it was Walther gathering moss from the trees. Without knowing what he was doing he took aim — Walther looked around and motioned to him with a threatening gesture. But as he did so the arrow sped, and Walther fell headlong.

Eckbert felt relieved and calm, and yet a feeling of horror drove him back to his castle. He had a long distance to go, for he had wandered far into the forest. When he arrived home, Bertha had already died — before her death she had spoken a great deal about Walther and the old woman.

For a long time Eckbert lived in greatest seclusion. He had always been somewhat melancholy because the strange story of his wife rather worried him; he had always lived in fear of an unfortunate event that might take place, but now he was completely at variance with himself. The murder of his friend stood constantly before his eyes — he spent his life reproaching himself.

In order to divert his thoughts, he occasionally betook himself to the nearest large city, where he attended parties and banquets. He wished to have a friend to fill the vacancy in his soul, and then again, when he thought of Walther, the very word friend made him shudder. He was convinced that he would necessarily be unhappy with all his friends. He had lived so long in beautiful harmony with Bertha, and Walther's friendship had made him happy for so many years, and now both of them had been so suddenly taken from him that his life seemed at times more like a strange fairy-tale than an actual mortal existence.

A knight, Hugo von Wolfsberg, became attached to the quiet, melancholy Eckbert, and seemed to cherish a genuine fondness for him. Eckbert was strangely surprised; he met the knight's friendly advances more quickly than the other expected. They were now frequently together, the stranger did Eckbert all sorts of favors, scarcely ever did either of them ride out without the other, they met each other at all the parties — in short, they seemed to be inseparable.

Eckbert was, nevertheless, happy only for short moments at a time, for he felt quite sure that Hugo loved him only by mistake — he did not know him, nor his history, and he felt the same impulse again to unfold his soul to him in order to ascertain for sure how staunch a friend Hugo was. Then again doubts and the fear of being detested restrained him. There were many hours in which he felt so convinced of his own unworthiness as to believe that no person, who knew him at all intimately, could hold him worthy of esteem. But he could not resist the impulse; in the course of a long walk he revealed his entire history to his friend, and asked him if he could possibly love a murderer. Hugo was touched and tried to comfort him. Eckbert followed him back to the city with a lighter heart.

However, it seemed to be his damnation that his suspicions should awaken just at the time when he grew confidential; for they had no more than entered the hall when the glow of the many lights revealed an expression in his friend's features which he did not like. He thought he detected a malicious smile, and it seemed to him that he, Hugo, said very little to him, that he talked a great deal with the other people present, and seemed to pay absolutely no attention to him. There was an old knight in the company who had always shown himself as Eckbert's rival, and had often inquired in a peculiar way about his riches and his wife. Hugo now approached this man, and they talked together a long time secretly, while every now and then they glanced toward Eckbert. He, Eckbert, saw in this a confirmation of his suspicions; he believed that he had been betrayed, and a terrible rage overcame him. As he continued to stare in that direction, he suddenly saw Walther's head, all his features, and his entire figure, so familiar to him. Still looking, he became convinced that it was nobody but Walther himself who was talking with the old man. His terror was indescribable; completely beside himself, he rushed out, left the city that night, and, after losing his way many times, returned to his castle.

Like a restless spirit he hurried from room to room. No thought could he hold fast; the pictures in his mind grew more and more terrible, and he did not sleep a wink. The idea often occurred to him that he was crazy and that all these notions were merely the product of his own imagination. Then again he remembered Walther's features, and it was all more puzzling to him than ever. He resolved to go on a journey in order to compose his thoughts; he had long since given up the idea of a friend and the wish for a companion.

Without any definite destination in view, he set out, nor did he pay much attention to the country that lay before him. After he had trotted along several days on his horse, he suddenly lost his way in a maze of rocks, from which he was unable to discover any egress. Finally he met an old peasant who showed him a way out, leading past a waterfall. He started to give him a few coins by way of thanks, but the peasant refused them.

"What can it mean?" he said to himself. "I could easily imagine that that man was no other than Walther." He looked back once more — it was indeed no one else but Walther!

Eckbert spurred on his horse as fast as it could run — through meadows and forests, until, completely exhausted, it collapsed beneath him. Unconcerned, he continued his journey on foot.

Dreamily he ascended a hill. There he seemed to hear a dog barking cheerily close by — birch trees rustled about him — he heard the notes of a wonderful song:

O solitude
Of lonely wood,
Thou chiefest good,
Where thou dost brood
Is joy renewed,
O solitude!

Now it was all up with Eckbert's consciousness and his senses; he could not solve the mystery whether he was now dreaming or had formerly dreamt of a woman Bertha. The most marvelous was confused with the most ordinary — the world around him was bewitched — no thought, no memory was under his control.

An old crook-backed woman with a cane came creeping up the hill, coughing.

"Are you bringing my bird, my pearls, my dog?" she cried out to him. "Look—wrong punishes itself. I and no other was your friend Walther, your Hugo."

"God in Heaven!" said Eckbert softly to himself. "In what terrible solitude I have spent my life."

"And Bertha was your sister."

Eckbert fell to the ground.

"Why did she desert me so deceitfully? Otherwise everything would have ended beautifully—her probation-time was already over. She was the daughter of a knight, who had a shepherd bring her up—the daughter of your father."

"Why have I always had a presentiment of these facts?" cried Eckbert.

"Because in your early youth you heard your father tell of them. On his wife's account he could not bring up this daughter himself, for she was the child of another woman."

Eckbert was delirious as he breathed his last; dazed and confused he heard the old woman talking, the dog barking, and the bird repeating its song.

THE ELVES* (1811)

By Ludwig Tieck

TRANSLATED BY FREDERIC H. HEDGE

"WHERE is our little Mary?" asked the father.

"She is playing out upon the green there, with our neighbor's boy," replied the mother.

"I wish they may not run away and lose themselves," said he; "they are so heedless."

The mother looked for the little ones, and brought them their evening luncheon. "It is warm," said the boy; and Mary eagerly reached out for the red cherries.

"Have a care, children," said the mother, "and do not run too far from home, or into the wood; father and I are going to the fields."

Little Andrew answered: "Never fear, the wood frightens us; we shall sit here by the house, where there are people near us."

The mother went in, and soon came out again with her husband. They locked the door, and turned toward the fields to look after their laborers and see their hay-harvest in the meadow. Their house lay upon a little green height, encircled by a pretty ring of paling, which likewise inclosed their fruit and flower-garden. The hamlet stretched somewhat deeper down, and on the other side lay the castle of the Count. Martin rented the large farm from this nobleman, and was living in contentment with his wife and only child; for he yearly saved some money, and had the prospect of becoming a man of substance by his industry, for the ground was productive, and the Count not illiberal.

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* Permission Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.

As he walked with his wife to the fields, he gazed cheerfully round, and said: "What a different look this quarter has, Brigitta, from the place we lived in formerly! Here it is all so green; the whole village is bedecked with thick-spreading fruit-trees; the ground is full of beautiful herbs and flowers; all the houses are cheerful and cleanly, the inhabitants are at their ease: nay, I could almost fancy that the woods are greener here than elsewhere, and the sky bluer; and, so far as the eye can reach, you have pleasure and delight in beholding the bountiful Earth."

"And whenever you cross the stream," said Brigitta, "you are, as it were, in another world, all is so dreary and withered; but every traveler declares that our village is the fairest in the country, far or near."

"All but that fir-ground," said her husband; "do but look back to it, how dark and dismal that solitary spot is lying in the gay scene — the dingy fir-trees, with the smoky huts behind them, the ruined stalls, the brook flowing past with a sluggish melancholy."

"It is true," replied Brigitta; "if you but approach that spot, you grow disconsolate and sad, you know not why. What sort of people can they be that live there, and keep themselves so separate from the rest of us, as if they had an evil conscience?"

"A miserable crew," replied the young farmer; "gipsies, seemingly, that steal and cheat in other quarters, and have their hoard and hiding-place here. I wonder only that his lordship suffers them."

"Who knows," said the wife, with an accent of pity, "but perhaps they may be poor people, wishing, out of shame, to conceal their poverty; for, after all, no one can say aught ill of them; the only thing is, that they do not go to church, and none knows how they live; for the little garden, which indeed seems altogether waste, cannot possibly support them; and fields they have none."

"God knows," said Martin, as they went along, "what trade they follow; no mortal comes to them; for the place they live in is as if bewitched and excommunicated, so that even our wildest fellows will not venture into it.''

Such conversation they pursued while walking to the fields. That gloomy spot they spoke of lay apart from the hamlet. In a dell, begirt with firs, you might behold a hut and various dilapidated farm-houses; rarely was smoke seen to mount from it, still more rarely did men appear there; though at times curious people, venturing somewhat nearer, had perceived upon the bench before the hut some hideous women, in ragged clothes, dandling in their arms some children equally dirty and ill-favored; black dogs were running up and down upon the boundary; and, at eventide, a man of monstrous size was seen to cross the foot-bridge of the brook, and disappear in the hut; then, in the darkness, various shapes were observed, moving like shadows round an open fire. This piece of ground, the firs, and the ruined hut, formed in truth a strange contrast with the bright green landscape, the white houses of the hamlet, and the stately new-built castle.

The two little ones had now eaten their fruit; it came into their heads to run races; and the little nimble Mary always got the start of the less active Andrew. ''It is not fair,'' cried Andrew at last; ''let us try it for some length, then we shall see who wins.''

''As thou wilt,'' said Mary; ''only to the brook we must not run.''

''No,'' said Andrew; ''but there, on the hill, stands the large pear-tree, a quarter of a mile from this. I shall run by the left, round past the fir-ground; thou canst try it by the right, over the fields; so we do not meet till we get up, and then we shall see which of us is the swifter.''

''Done,'' cried Mary, and began to run; ''for we shall not interfere with each other by the way, and my father says it is as far to the hill by that side of the gipsies' house as by this.''

Andrew had already started, and Mary, turning to the right, could no longer see him. ''It is very silly,'' said she to herself; "I have only to take heart, and run along the bridge, past the hut, and through the yard, and I shall certainly be first." She was already standing by the brook and the clump of firs. "Shall I? No; it is too frightful," said she. A little white dog was standing on the farther side, and barking with might and main. In her terror, Mary thought the dog some monster, and sprang back. "Fie! fie!" said she, "the dolt is gone half way by this time, while I stand here considering." The little dog kept barking, and, as she looked at it more narrowly, it seemed no longer frightful, but, on the contrary, quite pretty; it had a red collar round its neck, with a glittering bell; and as it raised its head, and shook itself in barking, the little bell sounded with the finest tinkle. "Well, I must risk it!" cried she: "I will run for life; quick, quick, I am through; certainly to Heaven, they cannot eat me up alive in half a minute!" And with this, the gay, courageous little Mary sprang along the foot-bridge; passed the dog, which ceased its barking, and began to fawn on her; and in a moment she was standing on the other bank, and the black firs all round concealed from view her father's house and the rest of the landscape.

But what was her astonishment when here! The loveliest, most variegated flower-garden lay round her; tulips, roses, and lilies, were glittering in the fairest colors; blue and gold-red butterflies were wavering in the blossoms; cages of shining wire were hung on the espaliers, with many-colored birds in them, singing beautiful songs; and children in short white frocks, with flowing yellow hair and brilliant eyes, were frolicking about; some playing with lambkins, some feeding the birds, or gathering flowers and giving them to one another; some, again, were eating cherries, grapes, and ruddy apricots. No hut was to be seen; but instead of it, a large fair house, with a brazen door and lofty statues, stood glancing in the middle of the space. Mary was confounded with surprise, and knew not what to think; but, not being bashful, she went right up to the first of the children, held out her hand, and wished the little creature good evening.

"Art thou come to visit us, then?" asked the glittering child; "I saw thee running, playing on the other side, but thou wert frightened for our little dog."

"So you are not gipsies and rogues," exclaimed Mary, "as Andrew always told me! He is a stupid thing, and talks of much he does not understand."

"Stay with us," said the strange little girl; "thou wilt like it well."

"But we are running a race."

"Thou wilt find thy comrade soon enough. There, take and eat."

Mary ate, and found the fruit more sweet than any she had ever tasted in her life before; and Andrew, and the race, and the prohibition of her parents, were entirely forgotten.

A stately woman, in a shining robe, came toward them, and asked about the stranger child. "Fairest lady," said Mary, "I came running hither by chance, and now they wish to keep me."

"Thou art aware, Zerina," said the lady, "that she can be here for but a little while; besides, thou shouldst have asked my leave."

"I thought," said Zerina, "when I saw her admitted across the bridge, that I might do it; we have often seen her running in the fields, and thou thyself hast taken pleasure in her lively temper. She will have to leave us soon enough."

"No, I will stay here," said the little stranger; "for here it is so beautiful, and here I shall find the prettiest playthings, and store of berries and cherries to boot. On the other side it is not half so grand."

The gold-robed lady went away with a smile; and many of the children now came bounding round the happy Mary in their mirth, and twitched her, and incited her to dance;

others brought her lambs, or curious playthings; others made music on instruments, and sang to it.

She kept, however, by the playmate who had first met her; for Zerina was the kindest and loveliest of them all. Little Mary cried and cried again: "I will stay with you forever; I will stay with you, and you shall be my sisters;" at which the children all laughed, and embraced her. "Now, we shall have a royal sport," said Zerina. She ran into the palace, and returned with a little golden box, in which lay a quantity of seeds, like glittering dust. She lifted a few with her little hand, and scattered some grains on the green earth. Instantly the grass began to move, as in waves; and, after a few moments, bright rose-bushes started from the ground, shot rapidly up, and budded all at once, while the sweetest perfume filled the place. Mary also took a little of the dust, and, having scattered it, she saw white lilies, and the most variegated pinks, pushing up. At a signal from Zerina, the flowers disappeared, and others rose in their room. "Now," said Zerina, "look for something greater." She laid two pine-seeds in the ground, and stamped them in sharply with her foot. Two green bushes stood before them. "Grasp me fast," said she; and Mary threw her arms about the slender form. She felt herself borne upward; for the trees were springing under them with the greatest speed; the tall pines waved to and fro, and the two children held each other fast embraced, swinging this way and that in the red clouds of the twilight, and kissed each other, while the rest were climbing up and down the trunks with quick dexterity, pushing and teasing one another with loud laughter when they met; if any fell down in the press, they flew through the air, and sank slowly and surely to the ground. At length Mary was beginning to be frightened; and the other little child sang a few loud tones, and the trees again sank down and set them on the ground as gently as they had lifted them before to the clouds.

They next went through the brazen door of the palace.

Here many fair women, elderly and young, were sitting in the round hall, partaking of the fairest fruits and listening to glorious invisible music. In the vaulting of the ceiling, palms, flowers, and groves stood painted, among which little figures of children were sporting and winding in every graceful posture; and with the tones of the music, the images altered and glowed with the most burning colors; now the blue and green were sparkling like radiant light, now these tints faded back in paleness, the purple flamed up, and the gold took fire; and then the naked children seemed to be alive among the flower-garlands, and to draw breath and emit it through their ruby-colored lips; so that by turns you could see the glance of their little white teeth, and the lighting up of their azure eyes.

From the hall, a stair of brass led down to a subterranean chamber. Here lay much gold and silver, and precious stones of every hue shone out between them. Strange vessels stood along the walls, and all seemed filled with costly things. The gold was worked into many forms, and glittered with the friendliest red. Many little dwarfs were busied in sorting the pieces from the heap, and putting them in the vessels; others, hunch-backed and bandy-legged, with long red noses, were tottering slowly along, half-bent to the ground, under full sacks, which they bore as millers do their grain, and, with much panting, shaking out the gold-dust on the ground. Then they darted awkwardly to the right and left, and caught the rolling balls that were likely to run away; and it happened now and then that one in his eagerness upset another, so that both fell heavily and clumsily to the ground. They made angry faces, and looked askance, as Mary laughed at their gestures and their ugliness. Behind them sat an old crumpled little man, whom Zerina reverently greeted; he thanked her with a grave inclination of his head. He held a sceptre in his hand, and wore a crown upon his brow, and all the other dwarfs appeared to regard him as their master and obey his nod.

"What more wanted?" asked he, with a surly voice, as the children came a little nearer. Mary was afraid, and did not speak; but her companion answered, they were only come to look about them in the chamber. "Still your old child-tricks!" replied the dwarf; "will there never be an end to idleness?" With this, he turned again to his employment, kept his people weighing and sorting the ingots; some he sent away on errands, some he chid with angry tones.

"Who is the gentleman?" asked Mary.

"Our Metal-Prince," replied Zerina, as they walked along.

They seemed once more to reach the open air, for they were standing by a lake, yet no sun appeared, and they saw no sky above their heads. A little boat received them, and Zerina steered it diligently forward. It shot rapidly along. On gaining the middle of the lake, little Mary saw that multitudes of pipes, channels, and brooks were spreading from the little sea in every direction. "These waters to the right," said Zerina, "flow beneath your garden, and this is why it blooms so freshly; by the other side we get down into the great stream." On a sudden, out of all the channels, and from every quarter of the lake, came a crowd of little children swimming up; some wore garlands of sedge and water-lily; some had red stems of coral, others were blowing on crooked shells; a tumultuous noise echoed merrily from the dark shores; among the children might be seen the fairest women sporting in the waters, and often several of the children sprang about some one of them, and with kisses hung upon her neck and shoulders. All saluted the stranger; and these steered onward through the revelry out of the lake, into a little river, which grew narrower and narrower. At last the boat came aground. The strangers took their leave, and Zerina knocked against the cliff. This opened like a door, and a female form, all red, assisted them to mount. "Are you all brisk here?" inquired Zerina. "They are just at work," replied the other,

" and happy as they could wish; indeed, the heat is very pleasant."

They went up a winding stair, and on a sudden Mary found herself in a most resplendent hall, so that, as she entered, her eyes were dazzled by the radiance. Flame-colored tapestry covered the walls with a purple glow; and when her eye had grown a little used to it, the stranger saw, to her astonishment, that, in the tapestry, there were figures moving up and down in dancing joyfulness, in form so beautiful, and of so fair proportions, that nothing could be seen more graceful; their bodies were as of red crystal, so that it appeared as if the blood were visible within them, flowing and playing in its courses. They smiled on the stranger, and saluted her with various bows; but as Mary was about approaching nearer them, Zerina plucked her sharply back, crying: " Thou wilt burn thyself, my little Mary, for the whole of it is fire."

Mary felt the heat. " Why do the pretty creatures not come out," asked she, " and play with us?"

"As thou livest in the Air," replied the other, " so are they obliged to stay continually in Fire, and would faint and languish if they left it. Look now, how glad they are, how they laugh and shout; those down below spread out the fire-floods everywhere beneath the earth, and thereby the flowers, and fruits, and wine, are made to flourish; these red streams again are to run beside the brooks of water; and thus the fiery creatures are kept ever busy and glad. But for thee it is too hot here; let us return to the garden."

In the garden, the scene had changed since they left it. The moonshine was lying on every flower; the birds were silent, and the children were asleep in complicated groups, among the green groves. Mary and her friend, however, did not feel fatigue, but walked about in the warm summer night, in abundant talk, till morning.

When the day dawned, they refreshed themselves on fruit and milk, and Mary said: " Suppose we go, by way of change, to the firs, and see how things look there?"

"With all my heart," replied Zerina; "thou wilt see our watchmen, too, and they will surely please thee; they are standing up among the trees on the mound." The two proceeded through the flower-gardens by pleasant groves, full of nightingales; then they ascended vine-hills; and at last, after long following the windings of a clear brook, arrived at the firs and the height which bounded the domain. "How does it come," asked Mary, "that we have to walk so far here, when, without, the circuit is so narrow?"

"I know not," said her friend; "but so it is."

They mounted to the dark firs, and a chill wind blew from without in their faces; a haze seemed lying far and wide over the landscape. On the top were many strange forms standing, with mealy, dusty faces, their misshapen heads not unlike those of white owls; they were clad in folded cloaks of shaggy wool; they held umbrellas of curious skins stretched out above them; and they waved and fanned themselves incessantly with large bat's wings, which flared out curiously beside the woolen roquelaures. "I could laugh, yet I am frightened," cried Mary.

"These are our good trusty watchmen," said her playmate; "they stand here and wave their fans, that cold anxiety and inexplicable fear may fall on every one that attempts to approach us. They are covered so, because without it is now cold and rainy, which they cannot bear. But snow, or wind, or cold air, never reaches down to us; here is an everlasting spring and summer: yet if these poor people on the top were not frequently relieved, they would certainly perish."

"But who are you, then?" inquired Mary, while again descending to the flowery fragrance; "or have you no name at all?"

"We are called the Elves," replied the friendly child; "people talk about us on the Earth, as I have heard."

They now perceived a mighty bustle on the green. "The fair Bird is come!" cried the children to them: all hastened to the hall. Here, as they approached, young and old were crowding over the threshold, all shouting for joy; and from within resounded a triumphant peal of music. Having entered, they perceived the vast circuit filled with the most varied forms, and all were looking upward to a large Bird with gleaming plumage, that was sweeping slowly round in the dome, and in its stately flight describing many a circle. The music sounded more gaily than before; the colors and lights alternated more rapidly. At last the music ceased; and the Bird, with a rustling noise, floated down upon a glittering crown that hung hovering in air under the high window by which the hall was lighted from above. His plumage was purple and green, and shining golden streaks played through it; on his head there waved a diadem of feathers, so resplendent that they sparkled like jewels. His bill was red, and his legs of a flashing blue. As he moved, the tints gleamed through each other, and the eye was charmed with their radiance. His size was as that of an eagle. But now he opened his glittering beak; and sweetest melodies came pouring from his moved breast, in finer tones than the lovesick nightingale gives forth; still stronger rose the song, and streamed like floods of Light, so that all, the very children themselves, were moved by it to tears of joy and rapture. When he ceased, all bowed before him; he again flew round the dome in circles, then darted through the door, and soared into the light heaven, where he shone far up like a red point, and then soon vanished from their eyes.

"Why are ye all so glad?" inquired Mary, bending to her fair playmate, who seemed smaller than yesterday.

"The King is coming!" said the little one; "many of us have never seen him, and whithersoever he turns his face, there are happiness and mirth; we have long looked for him, more anxiously than you look for spring when winter lingers with you; and now he has announced, by his fair herald, that he is at hand. This wise and glorious Bird, that has been sent to us by the King, is called Phœnix; he dwells far off in Arabia, on a tree — there is no other

Permission Velhagen & Klasing, Bielefeld and Leipzig MORITZ VON SCHWIND

DANCE OF THE ELVES

that resembles it on Earth, as in like manner there is no second Phœnix. When he feels himself grown old, he builds a pile of balm and incense, kindles it, and dies singing; and then from the fragrant ashes soars up the renewed Phœnix with unlessened beauty. It is seldom he so wings his course that men behold him; and when once in centuries this does occur, they note it in their annals, and expect remarkable events. But now, my friend, thou and I must part; for the sight of the King is not permitted thee.''

Then the lady with the golden robe came through the throng, and beckoning Mary to her, led her into a sequestered walk. ''Thou must leave us, my dear child,'' said she; ''the King is to hold his court here for twenty years, perhaps longer; and fruitfulness and blessings will spread far over the land, but chiefly here beside us; all the brooks and rivulets will become more bountiful, all the fields and gardens richer, the wine more generous, the meadows more fertile, and the woods more fresh and green; a milder air will blow, no hail shall hurt, no flood shall threaten. Take this ring, and think of us; but beware of telling any one of our existence or we must fly this land, and thou and all around will lose the happiness and blessing of our neighborhood. Once more, kiss thy playmate, and farewell.'' They issued from the walk; Zerina wept, Mary stooped to embrace her, and they parted. Already she was on the narrow bridge; the cold air was blowing on her back from the firs; the little dog barked with all its might, and rang its little bell; she looked round, then hastened over, for the darkness of the firs, the bleakness of the ruined huts, the shadows of the twilight, were filling her with terror.

''What a night my parents must have had on my account!'' said she within herself, as she stepped on the green; ''and I dare not tell them where I have been, or what wonders I have witnessed, nor indeed would they believe me.'' Two men passing by saluted her, and as they went along, she heard them say: ''What a pretty girl! Where can she have come from?'' With quickened steps she approached the house; but the trees which were hanging last night loaded with fruit were now standing dry and leafless; the house was differently painted, and a new barn had been built beside it. Mary was amazed, and thought she must be dreaming. In this perplexity she opened the door; and behind the table sat her father, between an unknown woman and a stranger youth. "Good God! Father," cried she, "where is my mother?"

"Thy mother!" said the woman, with a forecasting tone, and sprang toward her: "Ha, thou surely canst not — yes, indeed, indeed thou art my lost, long-lost, dear, only Mary!" She had recognized her by a little brown mole beneath the chin, as well as by her eyes and shape. All embraced her, all were moved with joy, and the parents wept. Mary was astonished that she almost reached to her father's stature; and she could not understand how her mother had become so changed and faded; she asked the name of the stranger youth. "It is our neighbor's Andrew," said Martin. "How comest thou to us again, so unexpectedly, after seven long years? Where hast thou been? Why didst thou never send us tidings of thee?"

"Seven years!" said Mary, and could not order her ideas and recollections. "Seven whole years?"

"Yes, yes," said Andrew, laughing, and shaking her trustfully by the hand; "I have won the race, good Mary; I was at the pear-tree and back again seven years ago, and thou, sluggish creature, art but just returned!"

They again asked, they pressed her; but remembering her instruction, she could answer nothing. It was they themselves chiefly that, by degrees, shaped a story for her: How, having lost her way, she had been taken up by a coach, and carried to a strange remote part, where she could not give the people any notion of her parents' residence; how she was conducted to a distant town, where certain worthy persons brought her up, and loved her; how they had lately died, and at length she had recollected her birthplace, and so returned. "No matter how it is!"

exclaimed her mother; "enough that we have thee again, my little daughter, my own, my all!"

Andrew waited supper, and Mary could not be at home in anything she saw. The house seemed small and dark; she felt astonished at her dress, which was clean and simple, but appeared quite foreign; she looked at the ring on her finger, and the gold of it glittered strangely, inclosing a stone of burning red. To her father's question, she replied that the ring also was a present from her benefactors.

She was glad when the hour of sleep arrived, and she hastened to her bed. Next morning she felt much more collected; she had now arranged her thoughts a little, and could better stand the questions of the people in the village, all of whom came in to bid her welcome. Andrew was there too with the earliest, active, glad, and serviceable beyond all others. The blooming maiden of fifteen had made a deep impression on him; he had passed a sleepless night. The people of the castle likewise sent for Mary, and she had once more to tell her story to them, which was now grown quite familiar to her. The old Count and his Lady were surprised at her good breeding; she was modest, but not embarrassed; she made answer courteously in good phrases to all their questions; all fear of noble persons and their equipage had passed away from her; for when she measured these halls and forms by the wonders and the high beauty she had seen with the Elves in their hidden abode, this earthly splendor seemed but dim to her, the presence of men was almost mean. The young lords were charmed with her beauty.

It was now February. The trees were budding earlier than usual; the nightingale had never come so soon; the spring rose fairer in the land than the oldest men could recollect it. In every quarter, little brooks gushed out to irrigate the pastures and meadows; the hills seemed heaving, the vines rose higher and higher, the fruit-trees blossomed as they had never done; and a swelling fragrant blessedness hung suspended heavily in rosy clouds over the scene. All prospered beyond expectation: no rude day, no tempest injured the fruits; the wine flowed blushing in immense grapes; and the inhabitants of the place felt astonished, and were captivated as in a sweet dream. The next year was like its forerunner; but men had now become accustomed to the marvelous. In autumn, Mary yielded to the pressing entreaties of Andrew and her parents; she was betrothed to him, and in winter they were married.

She often thought with inward longing of her residence behind the fir-trees; she continued serious and still. Beautiful as all that lay around her was, she knew of something yet more beautiful; and from the remembrance of this a faint regret attuned her nature to soft melancholy. It smote her painfully when her father and mother talked about the gipsies and vagabonds that dwelt in the dark spot of ground. Often she was on the point of speaking out in defense of those good beings, whom she knew to be the benefactors of the land; especially to Andrew, who appeared to take delight in zealously abusing them; yet still she repressed the word that was struggling to escape her bosom. So passed this year; in the next, she was solaced by a little daughter, whom she named Elfrida, thinking of the designation of her friendly Elves.

The young people lived with Martin and Brigitta, the house being large enough for all, and helped their parents in conducting their now extended husbandry. The little Elfrida soon displayed peculiar faculties and gifts; for she could walk at a very early age, and could speak perfectly before she was a twelvemonth old; and after some few years she had become so wise and clever, and of such wondrous beauty, that all people regarded her with astonishment, and her mother could not banish the thought that her child resembled one of those shining little ones in the space behind the Firs. Elfrida cared not to be with other children, but seemed to avoid, with a sort of horror, their tumultuous amusements, and liked best to be alone. She would then retire into a corner of the garden, and read, or work diligently with her needle; often also you might see her sitting, as if deep in thought, or impetuously walking up and down the alleys, speaking to herself. Her parents readily allowed her to have her will in these things, for she was healthy, and waxed apace; only her strange sagacious answers and observations often made them anxious. "Such wise children do not grow to age," her grandmother, Brigitta, many times observed; "they are too good for this world; the child, besides, is beautiful beyond nature, and will never find her proper place on Earth."

The little girl had this peculiarity, that she was very loath to let herself be served by any one, but endeavored to do everything herself. She was almost the earliest riser in the house; she washed herself carefully, and dressed without assistance; at night she was equally careful; she took special heed to pack up her clothes and belongings with her own hands, allowing no one, not even her mother, to meddle with her articles. The mother humored her in this caprice, not thinking it of any consequence. But what was her astonishment, when, happening one holiday to insist, regardless of Elfrida's tears and screams, on dressing her out for a visit to the castle, she found upon her breast, suspended by a string, a piece of gold of a strange form, which she directly recognized as one of the sort she had seen in such abundance in the subterranean vaults! The little thing was greatly frightened, and at last confessed that she had found it in the garden, and, as she liked it much, had kept it carefully; she at the same time prayed so earnestly and pressingly to have it back that Mary fastened it again in its former place, and, full of thoughts, went out with her in silence to the castle.

Sideward from the farm-house lay some offices for the storing of produce and implements; and behind these there was a little green, with an old arbor, now visited by no one, as, from the new arrangement of the buildings, it lay too far from the garden. In this solitude Elfrida delighted most; and it occurred to nobody to interrupt her here, so that frequently her parents did not see her for half a day. One afternoon her mother chanced to be in these buildings, seeking for some lost article among the lumber; and she noticed that a beam of light was coming in, through a chink in the wall. She took a thought of looking through this aperture, and seeing what her child was busied with; and it happened that a stone was lying loose, and could be pushed aside, so that she obtained a view right into the arbor. Elfrida was sitting there on a little bench, and beside her the well-known Zerina; and the children were playing and amusing each other, in the kindliest unity. The Elf embraced her beautiful companion, and said mournfully: "Ah! dear little creature, as I sport with thee, so have I sported with thy mother, when she was a child; but you mortals so soon grow tall and thoughtful! It is very hard; wert thou but to be a child as long as I!"

"Willingly would I do it," said Elfrida; "but they all say I shall come to sense and give over playing altogether; for I have great gifts, as they think, for growing wise. Ah! and then I shall see thee no more, thou dear Zerina! Yet it is with us as with the fruit-tree flowers — how glorious the blossoming apple-tree, with its red bursting buds! It looks so stately and broad; and every one that passes under it thinks surely something great will come of it; then the sun grows hot, and the buds come joyfully forth; but the wicked kernel is already there, which pushes off and casts away the fair flower's dress; and now, in pain and waxing, it can do nothing more, but must grow to fruit in harvest. An apple, to be sure, is pretty and refreshing; yet nothing to the blossom of spring. So is it also with us mortals; I am not glad in the least at growing to be a tall girl. Ah! could I but once visit you!"

"Since the King is with us," said Zerina, "it is quite impossible; but I will come to thee, my darling, often, often, and none shall see me either here or there. I will pass invisible through the air, or fly over to thee like a bird.

Oh, we will be much, much together, while thou art so little! What can I do to please thee?"

"Thou must like me very dearly," said Elfrida, "as I like thee in my heart; but come, let us make another rose."

Zerina took a well-known box from her bosom, threw two grains from it on the ground, and instantly a green bush stood before them, with two deep-red roses, bending their heads as if to kiss each other. The children plucked them smiling, and the bush disappeared. "O that it would not die so soon!" said Elfrida; "this red child, this wonder of the Earth!"

"Give it me here," said the little Elf; then breathed thrice upon the budding rose, and kissed it thrice. "Now," said she, giving back the rose, "it will continue fresh and blooming till winter."

"I will keep it," said Elfrida, "as an image of thee; I will guard it in my little room, and kiss it night and morning as if it were thyself."

"The sun is setting," said the other; "I must home." They embraced again, and Zerina vanished.

In the evening, Mary clasped her child to her breast, with a feeling of alarm and veneration. She henceforth allowed the good little girl more liberty than formerly; and often calmed her husband, when he came to search for the child; which for some time he was wont to do, as her retiredness did not please him, and he feared that, in the end, it might make her silly, or even pervert her understanding. The mother often glided to the chink; and almost always found the bright Elf beside her child, employed in sport, or in earnest conversation.

"Wouldst thou like to fly?" inquired Zerina once.

"Oh, well! How well!" replied Elfrida; and the fairy clasped her mortal playmate in her arms, and mounted with her from the ground, till they hovered above the arbor. The mother, in alarm, forgot herself, and pushed out her head in terror to look after them; when Zerina from the air, held up her finger, and threatened, yet smiled; then descended with the child, embraced her, and disappeared. After this, it happened more than once that Mary was observed by her; and every time, the shining little creature shook her head, or threatened, yet with friendly looks.

Often, in disputing with her husband, Mary had said in her zeal: "Thou dost injustice to the poor people in the hut!" But when Andrew pressed her to explain why she differed in opinion from the whole village, nay, from his lordship himself, and why she could understand it better than the whole of them, she still broke off embarrassed, and became silent. One day, after dinner, Andrew grew more insistent than ever, and maintained that, by one means or another, the crew must be packed away, as a nuisance to the country; when his wife, in anger, said to him: "Hush! for they are benefactors to thee and to every one of us."

"Benefactors!" cried the other, in astonishment; "These rogues and vagabonds?"

In her indignation, she was now at last tempted to relate to him, under promise of the strictest secrecy, the history of her youth; and as Andrew at every word grew more incredulous, and shook his head in mockery, she took him by the hand, and led him to the chink; where, to his amazement, he beheld the glittering Elf sporting with his child, and caressing her in the arbor. He knew not what to say; an exclamation of astonishment escaped him, and Zerina raised her eyes. On the instant she grew pale, and trembled violently; not with friendly, but with indignant looks, she made the sign of threatening, and then said to Elfrida: "Thou canst not help it, dearest heart; but outsiders will never learn sense, wise as they believe themselves." She embraced the little one with stormy haste; and then, in the shape of a raven, flew with hoarse cries over the garden, toward the firs.

In the evening, the little one was very still, she kissed her rose with tears; Mary felt depressed and frightened; Andrew scarcely spoke. It grew dark. Suddenly there went a rustling through the trees; birds flew to and fro with wild screaming, thunder was heard to roll, the earth shook, and tones of lamentation moaned in the air. Andrew and his wife had not courage to rise; they wrapped themselves in their bed clothes, and with fear and trembling awaited the day. Toward morning it grew calmer; and all was silent when the sun, with his cheerful light, rose over the wood.

Andrew dressed himself, and Mary now observed that the stone of the ring upon her finger had become quite pale. On opening the door, the sun shone clear on their faces, but the scene around them they could scarcely recognize. The freshness of the wood was gone; the hills were shrunk, the brooks were flowing languidly with scanty streams, the sky seemed gray; and when you turned to the Firs, they were standing there no darker or more dreary than the other trees. The huts behind were no longer frightful; and several inhabitants of the village came and told about the fearful night, and how they had been across the spot where the gipsies had lived; how these people must have left the place at last, for their huts were standing empty, and within had quite a common look, just like the dwellings of other poor people; some of their household gear was left behind.

Elfrida in secret said to her mother: "I could not sleep last night; and in my fright at the noise, I was praying from the bottom of my heart, when the door suddenly opened, and my playmate entered to take leave of me. She had a traveling-pouch slung round her, a hat on her head, and a large staff in her hand. She was very angry at thee; since on thy account she had now to suffer the severest and most painful punishments, as she had always been so fond of thee; for all of them, she said, were very loath to leave this quarter."

Mary forbade her to speak of this; and now the ferryman came across the river, and told them new wonders. As it was growing dark, a stranger of large size had come to him, and had hired his boat till sunrise, but with this condition, that the boatman should remain quiet in his house — at least should not cross the threshold of his door. " I was frightened," continued the old man, " and the strange bargain would not let me sleep. I slipped softly to the window, and looked toward the river. Great clouds were driving restlessly through the sky, and the distant woods were rustling fearfully; it was as if my cottage shook, and moans and lamentations glided round it. On a sudden, I perceived a white streaming light that grew broader and broader, like many thousands of falling stars; sparkling and waving, it proceeded forward from the dark Firground, moved over the fields, and spread itself along toward the river. Then I heard a trampling, a jingling, a bustling, and rushing, nearer and nearer; it went forward to my boat, and all stepped into it, men and women, as it seemed, and children; and the tall stranger ferried them over. In the river, by the boat, were swimming many thousands of glittering forms; in the air white clouds and lights were wavering; and all lamented and bewailed that they must travel forth so far, far away, and leave their beloved dwelling. The noise of the rudder and the water creaked and gurgled between whiles, and then suddenly there would be silence. Many a time the boat landed, and went back, and was again laden; many heavy casks, too, they took along with them, which multitudes of horrid-looking little fellows carried and rolled; whether they were devils or goblins, Heaven only knows. Then came, in waving brightness, a stately train; it seemed an old man, mounted on a small white horse, and all were crowding round him. I saw nothing of the horse but its head; for the rest of it was covered with costly glittering cloths and trappings; on his brow the old man had a crown, so bright that, as he came across, I thought the sun was rising there and the redness of the dawn glimmering in my eyes. Thus it went on all night; I at last fell asleep in the tumult, half in joy, half in terror. In the morning all was still; but the river is, as it were, run off, and I know not how I am to use my boat in it now."

The same year there came a blight; the woods died away, the springs ran dry; and the scene, which had once been the joy of every traveler, was in autumn standing waste, naked, and bald, scarcely showing here and there, in the sea of sand, a spot or two where grass, with a dingy greenness, still grew up. The fruit-trees all withered, the vines faded away, and the aspect of the place became so melancholy that the Count, with his people, next year left the castle, which in time decayed and fell to ruins.

Elfrida gazed on her rose day and night with deep longing, and thought of her kind playmate; and as it drooped and withered, so did she also hang her head; and before the spring, the little maiden had herself faded away. Mary often stood upon the spot before the hut, and wept for the happiness that had departed. She wasted herself away like her child, and in a few years she too was gone. Old Martin, with his son-in-law, returned to the quarter where he had lived before.

THE LIFE OF HEINRICH VON KLEIST

By John S. Nollen, Ph.D.

President of Lake Forest College

BRANDENBURG has, from olden times, been the stern mother of soldiers, rearing her sons in a discipline that has seemed harsh to the gentler children of sunnier lands. The rigid and formal pines that grow in sombre military files from the sandy ground make a fit landscape for this race of fighting and ruling men. In the wider extent of Prussia as well, the greatest names have been those of generals and statesmen, such as the Great Elector, Frederick the Great, and Bismarck, rather than poets and artists. Even among the notable writers of this region, intellectual power has usually predominated over gifts of feeling or of imagination; the arid, formal talent of Gottsched is an exemplary instance, and the singularly cold and colorless mind of the greatest thinker of modern times, Immanuel Kant, seems eminently Prussian in quality. Growing out of such traditions and antecedents as these, the genius of Heinrich von Kleist appears as a striking anomaly.

This first great literary artist of Prussia was descended from a representative Prussian family of soldiers, which had numbered eighteen generals among its members. Heinrich von Kleist was born October 18, 1777, at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, in the heart of Brandenburg, where his father was stationed as a captain in the service of Frederick the Great. The parents, both of gentle birth, died before their children had grown to maturity. Heinrich was predestined by all the traditions of the family to a military career; after a private education he became, at the age of fourteen, a corporal in the regiment of guards at Pots-

Permission Oskar Beck, Munich

HEINRICH VON KLEIST
IN HIS TWENTY-FOURTH YEAR
Made after a miniature presented by the poet to his bride

dam. The regiment was ordered south for the Rhine campaign against the French revolutionists, but the young soldier saw little actual fighting, and in June, 1795, his battalion had returned to Potsdam; he was then an ensign, and in his twentieth year was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant.

The humdrum duties and the easy pleasures of garrison life had no lasting charms for the future poet, who was as yet unconscious of his latent power, but was restlessly reaching out for a wider and deeper experience. We soon find him preparing himself, by energetic private study, for the University; in April, 1799, against the wishes of his family and his superior officers, he obtained a discharge from the army and entered upon his brief course as a student in his native city. He applied himself with laborious zeal to the mastery of a wide range of subjects, and hastened, with pedantic gravity, to retail his newly won learning to his sisters and a group of their friends. For the time being, the impulse of self-expression took this didactic turn, which is very prominent also in his correspondence. Within the year he was betrothed to a member of this informal class, Wilhelmina von Zenge, the daughter of an officer. The question of a career now crowded out his interest in study; in August, 1800, as a step toward the solution of this problem, Kleist returned to Berlin and secured a modest appointment in the customs department. He found no more satisfaction in the civil than in his former military service, and all manner of vague plans, artistic, literary and academic, occupied his mind. Intensive study of Kant's philosophy brought on an intellectual crisis, in which the ardent student found himself bereft of his fond hope of attaining to absolute truth. Meanwhile the romantic appeal of Nature, first heeded on a trip to Würzburg, and the romantic lure of travel, drew the dreamer irresistibly away from his desk. His sister Ulrica accompanied him on a journey that began in April, 1801, and brought them, by a devious route, to

Paris in July. By this time Kleist had become clearly conscious of his vocation; the strong creative impulse that had hitherto bewildered him now found its proper vent in poetic expression, and he felt himself dedicated to a literary career. With characteristic secretiveness he kept hidden, even from his sister, the drama at which he was quietly working.

Absorbed in his new ambition, Kleist found little in Paris to interest him. He felt the need of solitude for the maturing of his plans, and with the double object of seeking in idyllic pursuits the inspiration of Nature and of earning leisure for writing, he proposed to his betrothed that she join him secretly in establishing a home upon a small farm in Switzerland. When Wilhelmina found it impossible to accept this plan, Kleist coldly severed all relations with her. He journeyed to Switzerland in December, 1801, and in Bern became acquainted with a group of young authors, the novelist Heinrich Zschokke, the publisher Heinrich Gessner, and Ludwig Wieland, son of the famous author of *Oberon*. To these sympathetic friends he read his first tragedy, which, in its earlier draft, had a Spanish setting, as *The Thierrez Family* or *The Ghonorez Family*, but which, on their advice, was given a German background. This drama Gessner published for Kleist, under the title *The Schroffenstein Family*, in the winter of 1802–03. It had no sooner appeared than the author felt himself to have outgrown its youthful weaknesses of imitation and exaggeration. Another dramatic production grew directly out of the discussions of this little circle. The friends agreed, on a wager, to put into literary form the story suggested by an engraving that hung in Zschokke's room. By common consent the prize was awarded to Kleist's production, his one comedy, *The Broken Jug*.

In April, 1802, Kleist realized his romantic dream by taking up his abode, in rural seclusion, on a little island at the outlet of the Lake of Thun, amid the majestic scenery of the Bernese Oberland. In this retreat, encouraged by the applause of his first confidants, he labored with joyous energy, recasting his *Schroffenstein Family*, working out the *Broken Jug*, meditating historical dramas on Leopold of Austria and Peter the Hermit, and expending the best of his untrained genius on the plan of a tragedy, *Robert Guiscard*, in which he strove to create a drama of a new type, combining the beauties of Greek classical art and of Shakespeare; with his *Guiscard* the young poet even dared hope to " snatch the laurel wreath from Goethe's brow."

Two months of intense mental exertion in the seclusion of his island left Kleist exhausted, and he fell seriously ill; whereupon Ulrica, on receiving belated news of his plight, hastened to Bern to care for him. When a political revolution drove Ludwig Wieland from Bern, they followed the latter to Weimar, where the poet Wieland, the dean of the remarkable group of great authors gathered at Weimar, received Kleist kindly, and made him his guest at his country estate. With great difficulty Wieland succeeded in persuading his secretive visitor to reveal his literary plans; and when Kleist recited from memory some of the scenes of his unfinished *Guiscard*, the old poet was transported with enthusiasm; these fragments seemed to him worthy of the united genius of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Shakespeare, and he was convinced that Kleist had the power to " fill the void in the history of the German drama that even Goethe and Schiller had not filled." But in spite of Wieland's generous encouragement, Kleist found it impossible to complete this masterpiece, and his hopeless pursuit of the perfect ideal became an intolerable obsession to his ambitious and sensitive soul. He could not remain in Weimar. In Dresden old friends sought to cheer him in his desperate attempts to seize the elusive ideal; to more than one of them, in his despair, he proposed a joint suicide. Again he was driven to seek solace and inspiration in travel, a friend accompanying him to Switzerland. Arrived at Geneva in October, 1803, Kleist fell into the deepest despondency, and wrote Ulrica a letter full of hopeless renunciation. Half crazed by disappointment and wounded pride, he rushed madly through France to Paris, broke with his friend, who had again repelled a joint suicide, burned his manuscript of *Guiscard*, and made secretly for Boulogne, hoping to find an honorable death in Napoleon's projected invasion of England. Fortunately he fell in with an acquaintance who saved him from the risk of being arrested as a spy, and started him back on his homeward way. He was detained at Mentz by serious illness, but finally, in June, 1804, reappeared in Potsdam. The poet's spirit was broken, and he was glad to accept a petty civil post that took him to Königsberg. After a year of quiet work, he was enabled, by a small pension from Queen Louise, to resign his office and again devote himself to literature.

The two years spent in Königsberg were years of remarkable development in Kleist's literary power. Warned by the catastrophe of the earlier attempt to reach the heights at a single bound, he now schooled himself with simpler tasks: adaptations, from the French, of La Fontaine's poem, *The two Pigeons*, and of Molière's comedy, *Amphitryon* — both so altered in the interpretation that they seem more like originals than translations; prose tales that are admirable examples of this form — *The Marquise of O.*, *The Earthquake in Chili*, and the first part of the masterly short story *Michael Kohlhaas;* and the recasting of the unique comedy *The Broken Jug*. Finally he attempted another great drama in verse, *Penthesilea*, embodying in the old classical story the tragedy of his own desperate struggle for *Guiscard*, and his crushing defeat.

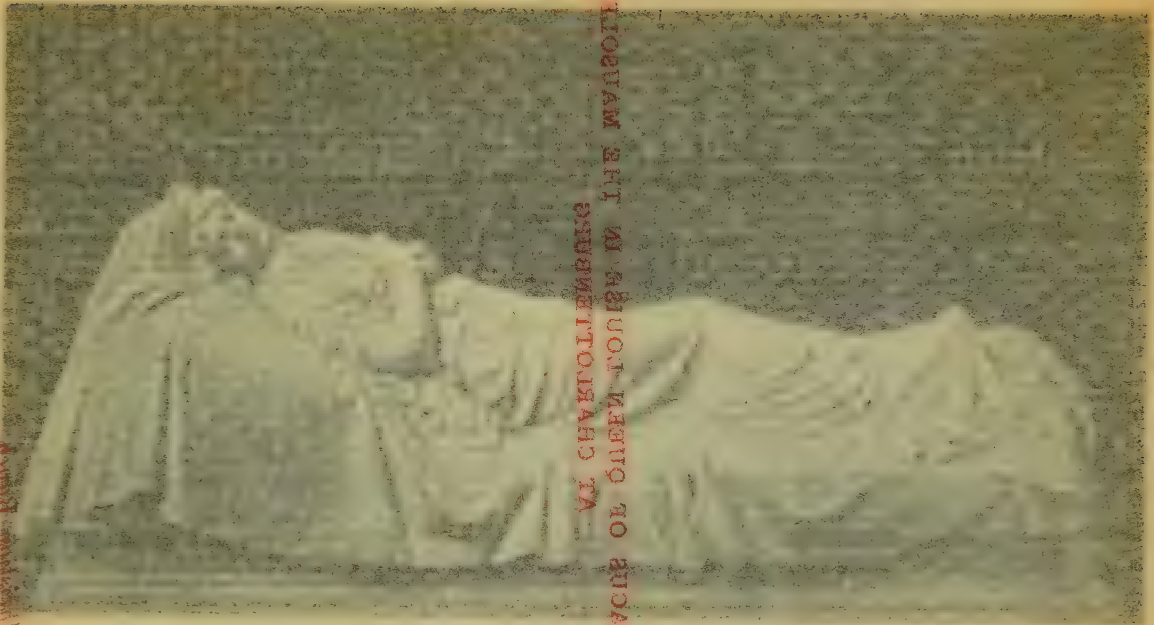
Meanwhile the clouds were gathering about his beloved country, and in October, 1806, the thunderbolt fell in the rout of the Prussian army at Jena. Napoleon's victorious troops pressed on to Berlin and the Prussian court retreated with the tide of fugitives to Königsberg. Kleist was overwhelmed by the misery of this cataclysm, which, however, he had clearly foreseen and foretold. With a group of friends he started on foot for Dresden, but was arrested as a spy at the gates of Berlin and held for months as a prisoner in French fortresses, before the energetic efforts of Ulrica and others procured his release.

Late in July, 1807, he finally arrived in Dresden, where he remained until April, 1809. These were the happiest and the most prolific months of his fragmentary life. The best literary and social circles of the Saxon capital were open to him, his talent was recognized by the leading men of the city, a laurel wreath was placed upon his brow by " the prettiest hands in Dresden; " at last he found all his hopes being realized. With three friends he embarked on an ambitious publishing enterprise, which included the issuing of a sumptuous literary and artistic monthly, the *Phœbus.* This venture was foredoomed to failure by the inexperience of its projectors and by the unsettled condition of a time full of political upheaval and most unfavorable to any literary enterprise. Kleist's own contributions to this periodical were of the highest value; here appeared first in print generous portions of *Penthesilea, The Broken Jug*, and the new drama *Kitty of Heilbronn*, the first act of the ill-fated *Robert Guiscard*, evidently reproduced from memory, *The Marquise of O.*, and part of *Michael Kohlhaas.* If we add to these works the great patriotic drama, *Arminius* (*Die Hermannsschlacht*), two tales, *The Betrothal in San Domingo* and *The Foundling*, and lyric and narrative poems, the production of the brief period in Dresden is seen to bulk very large.

In the stress of the times and in spite of the most strenuous efforts, the *Phœbus* went under with the first volume, and the publishing business was a total wreck. Kleist's joy at the acceptance of *The Broken Jug* by Goethe for the Weimar theatre was turned to bitterness when, because of unintelligent acting and stage management, this brilliant comedy failed wretchedly; the disappointed author held Goethe responsible for this fiasco and foolishly attacked him in a series of spiteful epigrams. He longed to have his *Arminius* performed at Vienna, but the Austrian authorities were too timid to risk the production of a play that openly preached German unity and a war of revenge against the "Roman tyranny" of Napoleon. Kleist then turned to lyric poetry and polemic tirades for the expression of his patriotic ardor. When Austria rose against Napoleon, he started for the seat of war and was soon the happy eye-witness of the Austrian victory at Aspern, in May, 1809. In Prague, with the support of the commandant, he planned a patriotic journal, for which he immediately wrote a series of glowing articles, mostly in the form of political satires. This plan was wrecked by the decisive defeat of the Austrians at Wagram in July.

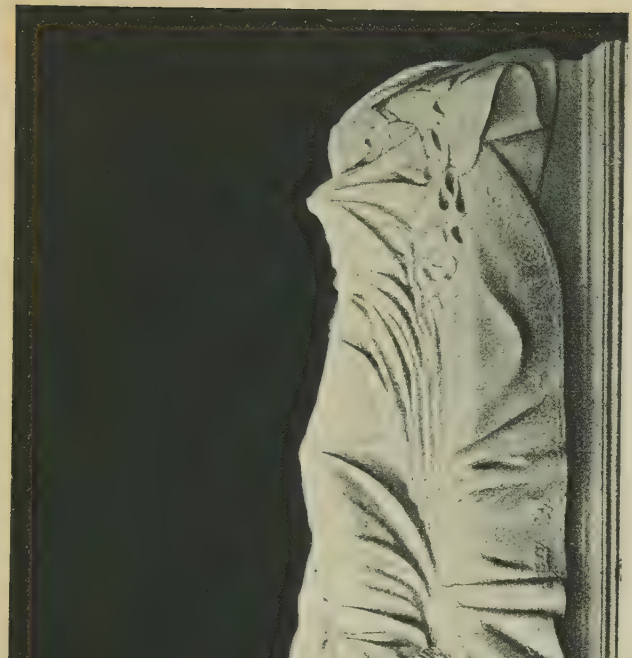
Broken by these successive disasters, Kleist again fell seriously ill; for four months his friends had no word from him, and reports of his death were current. In November, 1809, he came to Frankfort-on-the-Oder to dispose of his share in the family home as a last means of raising funds, and again disappeared. In January, 1810, he passed through Frankfort on the way to Berlin, to which the Prussian court, now subservient to Napoleon, had returned. He found many old friends in Berlin, and even had prospects of recognition from the court, as the brave and beautiful Queen Louise was very kindly disposed toward him. Again he turned to dramatic production, and in the patriotic Prussian play, *Prince Frederick of Homburg*, created his masterpiece. Fortune seemed once more to be smiling upon the dramatist; the *Prince of Homburg* was to be dedicated to Queen Louise, and performed privately at the palace of Prince Radziwill, before being given at the National Theatre. But again the cup of success was dashed from the poet's lips. With the death of Queen Louise, in July, 1810, he lost his only powerful friend at court, and now found it impossible to get a hearing for his drama.

Other disappointments came in rapid succession. *Kitty*



SARCOPHAGUS OF QUEEN LOUISE IN THE MAUSOLEUM AT CHARLOTTENBURG

Sculptor, Christian Rauch



of Heilbronn, performed after many delays at Vienna, was not a success, and Iffland, the popular dramatist and director of the Berlin Theatre, rejected this play, while accepting all manner of commonplace works by inferior authors. The famous publisher Cotta did print *Penthesilea*, but was so displeased with it that he made no effort to sell the edition, and *Kitty of Heilbronn*, declined by Cotta, fell flat when it was printed in Berlin. Two volumes of tales, including some masterpieces in this form, hardly fared better; the new numbers in this collection were *The Duel*, *The Beggar Woman of Locarno*, and *Saint Cecilia.* Again the much-tried poet turned to journalism. From October, 1810, until March, 1811, with the assistance of the popular philosopher Adam Müller and the well-known romantic authors Arnim, Brentano, and Fouqué, he published a politico-literary journal appearing five times a week. The enterprise began well, and aroused a great deal of interest. Gradually, however, the censorship of a government that was at once timid and tyrannical limited the scope and destroyed the effectiveness of the paper, and Kleist spent himself in vain efforts to keep it alive. The poet now found himself in a desperate predicament, financially ruined by the failure of all his enterprises, and discredited with the government, from which he vainly sought some reparation for the violence done to his journal; worst of all, he found himself without honor at home, where he was looked upon as a ne'er-do-well and a disgrace to the reputation of a fine old military family. As a last resort he applied for reinstatement in the army, it being a time when Prussia seemed to be girding herself for another struggle with Napoleon. But the attempt to borrow enough money for his military equipment failed, and he found no sympathy or support on a final visit to his family in Frankfort. In October, 1811, the patriotic men who had been quietly preparing for the inevitable war of liberation were horrified by the movement of the Prussian government toward another alliance with Napoleon; and

Kleist felt it impossible to enter an army that might at any moment be ordered to support the arch-enemy of his country. His case had become utterly hopeless.

At this juncture the unfortunate poet found what he had so often sought in his crises of despair — a companion in suicide. Through Adam Müller he had become acquainted with Henrietta Vogel, an intelligent woman of romantic temperament, who was doomed by an incurable disease to a life of suffering. She listened eagerly to Kleist's suggestions of an escape together from the intolerable ills of life. The two drove from Berlin to a solitary inn on the shore of the Wannsee, near Potsdam; here Kleist wrote a touching farewell letter to his sister, and, on the afternoon of November 21, 1811, after the most deliberate preparations, the companions strolled into the silent pine woods, where Kleist took Henrietta's life and then his own. In the same lonely place his grave was dug, and here the greatest Prussian poet lay forgotten, after the brief, though violent, sensation of his tragic end; half a century elapsed before a Prussian prince set up a simple granite monument to mark the grave. Ten years passed after Kleist's death before his last great dramas, *Arminius* and the *Prince of Homburg*, were published, edited by the eminent poet and critic Ludwig Tieck, who also brought out, in 1826, the first collection of Kleist's works. Long before this time, the patriotic uprising for which he had labored with desperate zeal in his later works, had brought liberation to Germany; it was on the thirty-sixth anniversary of Kleist's birth that Napoleon's power was shaken by the decisive Battle of Leipzig.

Heinrich von Kleist was born into a generation that was dominated by the spirit of Romanticism. Tieck and the Schlegels were a few years older, Fouqué was of the same age as he, and Arnim and Brentano somewhat younger. His acquaintance was largely with the authors who represented this tendency. In his own works, however, Kleist was singularly independent of the romantic influence. This is the more remarkable inasmuch as his character had many traits in common with the ardent spirits of the Romantic group. His uncompromising individualism and overweening ambition, his love of travel, his enthusiastic acceptance of Rousseau's gospel of Nature, are characteristically Romantic, and so, we may say, is his passionate patriotism. Eccentricities he had in plenty; there was something morbid in his excessive reserve, his exaggerated secretiveness about the most important interests of his life, as there surely was in his moroseness, which deepened at times into black despair. Goethe was most unpleasantly impressed by this abnormal quality of Kleist's personality, and said of the younger poet: "In spite of my honest desire to sympathize with him, I could not avoid a feeling of horror and loathing, as of a body beautifully endowed by nature, but infected with an incurable disease." That this judgment was unduly harsh is evident enough from the confidence and affection that Kleist inspired in many of the best men of his time.

Whatever may have been Kleist's personal peculiarities, his works give evidence of the finest artistic sanity and conscience. His acute sense of literary form sets him off from the whole generation of Romanticists, who held the author's personal caprice to be the supreme law of poetry, and most of whose important works were either medleys or fragments. He was his own severest critic, and labored over his productions, as he did over his own education, with untiring energy and intense concentration. A less scrupulous author would not have destroyed the manuscript of *Robert Guiscard* because he could not keep throughout its action the splendid promise of the first act. His works are usually marked by rare logical and artistic consistency. Seldom is there any interruption of the unity and simple directness of his actions by sub-plots or episodes, and he scorned the easy theatrical devices by which the successful playwrights of his day gained their effects. Whether in drama or story, his action grows naturally out of the characters and the situations. Hence the marvelous fact that his dramas can be performed with hardly an alteration, though the author, never having seen any of them on the stage, lacked the practical experience by which most dramatists learn the technique of their art.

Kleist evidently studied the models of classical art with care. His unerring sense of form, his artistic restraint in a day when caprice was the ruling fashion, and the conciseness of his expression, are doubtless due to classical influence. But, at the same time, he was an innovator, one of the first forerunners of modern realism. He describes and characterizes with careful, often microscopic detail; his psychological analysis is remarkably exact and incisive; and he fearlessly uses the ugly or the trivial when either better serves his purpose.

In all the varied volume of Kleist's works, there is very little that is mediocre or negligible. The *Schroffenstein Family*, to be sure, is prentice work, but it can bear comparison with the first plays of the greatest dramatists. The fragment of *Robert Guiscard* is masterly in its rapid cumulative exposition, representing the hero, idolized by his troops, as stricken with the plague when the crowning glory of his military career seems to be within his grasp; while the discord between Guiscard's son and nephew presages an irrepressible family conflict. The style, as Wieland felt when he listened with rapture to the author's recital, is a blend of classical and Elizabethan art. The opening chorus of the people, the formal balanced speeches, the analytical action, beginning on the verge of the catastrophe, are traits borrowed from Greek tragedy. On the other hand, there is much realistic characterization and a Shakespearian variety and freedom of tone. *The Broken Jug*, too, is analytical in its conduct. Almost from the first it is evident that Adam, the village judge, is himself the culprit in the case at trial in his court, and the comic efforts of the arch-rascal to squirm out of the inevitable discovery only serve to make his guilt the surer. In this comedy the blank verse adapts itself to all the turns of familiar humorous dialogue, and the effect of the Dutch genre-paintings of Teniers or Jan Steen is admirably reproduced in dramatic form. The slowly moving action, constantly reverting to past incidents, makes a successful performance difficult; the fate of this work on the stage has depended upon finding an actor capable of bringing out all the possibilities in the part of Adam, who is a masterpiece of comic self-characterization.

Penthesilea is a work apart. Passionate, headlong, almost savage, is the character of the queen of the Amazons, yet wonderfully sweet in its gentler moods and glorified with the golden glow of high poetry. Nothing could be further removed from the pseudo-classical manner of the eighteenth century than this modern and individual interpretation of the old mythical story of Penthesilea and Achilles, between whom love breaks forth in the midst of mortal combat. The clash of passions creates scenes in this drama that transcend the humanly and dramatically permissible. Yet there is a wealth of imaginative beauty and emotional melody in this tragedy beyond anything in Kleist's other works. It was written with his heart's blood; in it he uttered all the yearning and frenzy of his first passion for the unattainable and ruined masterpiece *Guiscard.*

Kitty of Heilbronn stands almost at the opposite pole from *Penthesilea.* The pathos of Griselda's unquestioning self-abnegation is her portion; she is the extreme expression of the docile quality that Kleist sought in his betrothed. Instead of the fabled scenes of Homeric combat, we have here as a setting the richly romantic and colorful life of the age of chivalry. The form, too, is far freer and more expansive, with an unconventional mingling of verse and prose.

The last two plays were born of the spirit that brought forth the War of Liberation. In them Kleist gave undying expression to his ardent patriotism; it was his deepest grief that these martial dramas were not permitted to sound their trumpet-call to a humbled nation yearning to be free. *Arminius* is a great dramatized philippic. The ancient Germanic chiefs Marbod and Arminius, representing in Kleist's intention the Austria and Prussia of his day, are animated by one common patriotic impulse, rising far above their mutual rivalries, to cast off the hateful and oppressive yoke of Rome; and after the decisive victory over Varus in the Teutoburg Forest, each of these strong chiefs is ready in devoted self-denial to yield the primacy to the other, in order that all Germans may stand together against the common foe. *Prince Frederick of Homburg* is a dramatic glorification of the Prussian virtues of discipline and obedience. But the finely drawn characters of this play are by no means rigid martinets. They are largely, frankly, generously human, confessing the right of feeling as well as reason to direct the will. Never has there been a more sympathetic literary exposition of the soldierly character than this last tribute of a devoted patriot to his beloved Brandenburg.

The narrative works of Kleist maintain the same high level as his dramas. *Michael Kohlhaas* is a good example of this excellent narrative art, for which Kleist found no models in German literature. Unity is a striking characteristic; the action can usually be summed up in a few words, such as the formula for this story, given expressly on its first page: "His sense of justice made him a robber and a murderer." There is no leisurely exposition of time, place, or situation; all the necessary elements are given concisely in the first sentences. The action develops logically, with effective use of retardation and climax, but without disturbing episodes; and the reader is never permitted to forget the central theme. The descriptive element is realistic, with only pertinent details swiftly presented, often in parentheses, while the action moves on. The characterization is skilfully indirect, through unconscious action and speech. The author does not shun the trivial or even the repulsive in detail, nor does he fear the most tragic catastrophes. He is scrupulously objective, and, in an age of expansive lyric expression, he is most chary of comment. The sentence structure, as in the dramas, is often intricate, but never lax. The whole work in all its parts is firmly and finely forged by a master workman.

Kleist has remained a solitary figure in German literature. Owing little to the dominant literary influences of his day, he has also found few imitators. Two generations passed before he began to come into his heritage of legitimate fame. Now that a full century has elapsed since his tragic death, his place is well assured among the greatest dramatic and narrative authors of Germany. A brave man struggling desperately against hopeless odds, a patriot expending his genius with lavish unselfishness for the service of his country in her darkest days, he has been found worthy by posterity to stand as the most famous son of a faithful Prussian family of soldiers.

HEINRICH VON KLEIST

MICHAEL KOHLHAAS (1808)

A Tale from an Old Chronicle

TRANSLATED BY FRANCES H. KING

TOWARD the middle of the sixteenth century there lived on the banks of the river Havel a horse-dealer by the name of Michael Kohlhaas, the son of a school-master, one of the most upright and, at the same time, one of the most terrible men of his day. Up to his thirtieth year this extraordinary man would have been considered the model of a good citizen. In a village which still bears his name, he owned a farmstead on which he quietly supported himself by plying his trade. The children with whom his wife presented him were brought up in the fear of God, and taught to be industrious and honest; nor was there one among his neighbors who had not enjoyed the benefit of his kindness or his justice. In short, the world would have had every reason to bless his memory if he had not carried to excess one virtue — his sense of justice, which made of him a robber and a murderer.

He rode abroad once with a string of young horses, all well fed and glossy-coated, and was turning over in his mind how he would employ the profit that he hoped to make from them at the fairs; part of it, as is the way with good managers, he would use to gain future profits, but he would also spend part of it in the enjoyment of the present. While thus engaged he reached the Elbe, and near a stately castle, situated on Saxon territory, he came upon a toll-bar which he had never found on this road before. Just in the midst of a heavy shower he halted with his horses and called to the toll-gate keeper, who soon after showed his surly face at the window. The horse-dealer told him to open the gate. " What new arrangement is this? " he asked, when the toll-gatherer, after some time, finally came out of the house.

" Seignorial privilege " answered the latter, unlocking the gate, " conferred by the sovereign upon Squire Wenzel Tronka."

" Is that so? " queried Kohlhaas; " the Squire's name is now Wenzel? " and gazed at the castle, the glittering battlements of which looked out over the field. " Is the old gentleman dead? "

" Died of apoplexy," answered the gate keeper, as he raised the toll-bar.

" Hum! Too bad! " rejoined Kohlhaas. "An estimable old gentleman he was, who liked to watch people come and go, and helped along trade and traffic wherever he could. He once had a causeway built because a mare of mine had broken her leg out there on the road leading to the village. Well, how much is it? " he asked, and with some trouble got out the few groschen demanded by the gate keeper from under his cloak, which was fluttering in the wind. " Yes, old man," he added, picking up the leading reins as the latter muttered " Quick, quick! " and cursed the weather; " if this tree had remained standing in the forest it would have been better for me and for you." With this he gave him the money, and started to ride on.

He had hardly passed under the toll-bar, however, when a new voice cried out from the tower behind him, " Stop there, horse-dealer! " and he saw the castellan close a window and come hurrying down to him. " Well, I wonder what he wants! " Kohlhaas asked himself, and halted with his horses. Buttoning another waistcoat over his ample body, the castellan came up to him and, standing with his back to the storm, demanded his passport.

" My passport? " queried Kohlhaas. Somewhat disconcerted, he replied that he had none, so far as he knew, but that, if some one would just describe to him what in the name of goodness this was, perhaps he might accidentally happen to have one about him. The castellan, eying him askance, retorted that without an official permit no horse-dealer was allowed to cross the border with horses. The horse-dealer assured him that seventeen times in his life he had crossed the border without such a permit; that he was well acquainted with all the official regulations which applied to his trade; that this would probably prove to be only a mistake; the castellan would please consider the matter and, since he had a long day's journey before him, not detain him here unnecessarily any longer. But the castellan answered that he was not going to slip through the eighteenth time, that the ordinance concerning this matter had been only recently issued, and that he must either procure the passport here or go back to the place from which he had come. After a moment's reflection, the horse-dealer, who was beginning to feel bitter, got down from his horse, turned it over to a groom, and said that he would speak to Squire Tronka himself on the subject. He really did walk toward the castle; the castellan followed him, muttering something about niggardly money-grubbers, and what a good thing it was to bleed them; and, measuring each other with their glances, the two entered the castle-hall.

It happened that the Squire was sitting over his wine with some merry friends, and a joke had caused them all to break into uproarious laughter just as Kohlhaas approached him to make his complaint. The Squire asked what he wanted; the young nobles, at sight of the stranger, became silent; but no sooner had the latter broached his request concerning the horses, than the whole group cried out, "Horses! Where are they?" and hurried over to the window to look at them. When they saw the glossy string, they all followed the suggestion of the Squire and flew down into the courtyard. The rain had ceased; the castellan, the steward, and the servant gathered round them and all scanned the horses. One praised a bright bay with a white star on its forehead, another preferred a chestnut, a third patted the dappled horse with tawny spots; and all were of the opinion that the horses were like deer, and that no finer were raised in the country. Kohlhaas answered cheerily that the horses were no better than the knights who were to ride them, and invited the men to buy. The Squire, who eagerly desired the big bay stallion, went so far as to ask its price, and the steward urged him to buy a pair of black horses, which he thought he could use on the farm, as they were short of horses. But when the horse-dealer had named his price the young knights thought it too high, and the Squire said that Kohlhaas would have to ride in search of the Round Table and King Arthur if he put such a high value on his horses. Kohlhaas noticed that the castellan and the steward were whispering together and casting significant glances at the black horses the while, and, moved by a vague presentiment, made every effort to sell them the horses. He said to the Squire, " Sir, I bought those black horses six months ago for twenty-five gold gulden; give me thirty and you shall have them." Two of the young noblemen who were standing beside the Squire declared quite audibly that the horses were probably worth that much; but the Squire said that while he might be willing to pay out money for the bay stallion he really should hardly care to do so for the pair of blacks, and prepared to go in. Whereupon Kohlhaas, saying that the next time he came that way with his horses they might perhaps strike a bargain, took leave of the Squire and, seizing the reins of his horse, started to ride away.

At this moment the castellan stepped forth from the crowd and reminded him that he would not be allowed to leave without a passport. Kohlhaas turned around and inquired of the Squire whether this statement, which meant the ruin of his whole trade, were indeed correct. The Squire, as he went off, answered with an embarrassed air, " Yes, Kohlhaas, you must get a passport. Speak to the castellan about it, and go your way.'' Kohlhaas assured him that he had not the least intention of evading the ordinances which might be in force concerning the exportation of horses. He promised that when he went through Dresden he would take out the passport at the chancery, and begged to be allowed to go on, this time, as he had known nothing whatever about this requirement. ''Well!'' said the Squire, as the storm at that moment began to rage again and the wind blustered about his scrawny legs; ''let the wretch go. Come!'' he added to the young knights, and, turning around, started toward the door. The castellan, facing about toward the Squire, said that Kohlhaas must at least leave behind some pledge as security that he would obtain the passport. The Squire stopped again under the castle gate. Kohlhaas asked how much security for the black horses in money or in articles of value he would be expected to leave. The steward muttered in his beard that he might just as well leave the blacks themselves.

''To be sure,'' said the castellan; ''that is the best plan; as soon as he has taken out the passport he can come and get them again at any time.'' Kohlhaas, amazed at such a shameless demand, told the Squire, who was holding the skirts of his doublet about him for warmth, that what he wanted to do was to sell the blacks; but as a gust of wind just then blew a torrent of rain and hail through the gate, the Squire, in order to put an end to the matter, called out, ''If he won't give up the horses, throw him back again over the toll-bar;'' and with that he went off.

The horse-dealer, who saw clearly that on this occasion he would have to yield to superior force, made up his mind to comply with the demand, since there really was no other way out of it. He unhitched the black horses and led them into a stable which the castellan pointed out to him. He left a groom in charge of them, provided him with money, warned him to take good care of the horses until he came back, and with the rest of the string continued his journey to Leipzig, where he purposed to go to the fair. As he rode along he wondered, in half uncertainty, whether after all such a law might not have been passed in Saxony for the protection of the newly started industry of horse-raising.

On his arrival in Dresden, where, in one of the suburbs of the city. he owned a house and stable — this being the headquarters from which he usually conducted his business at the smaller fairs around the country — he went immediately to the chancery. And here he learned from the councilors, some of whom he knew, that indeed, as his first instinct had already told him, the story of the passport was only made up. At Kohlhaas's request, the annoyed councilors gave him a written certificate of its baselessness, and the horse-dealer smiled at the lean Squire's joke, although he did not quite see what purpose he could have had in view. A few weeks later, having sold to his satisfaction the string of horses he had with him, Kohlhaas returned to Tronka Castle harboring no other resentment save that caused by the general misery of the world.

The castellan, to whom he showed the certificate, made no comment upon it, and to the horse-dealer's question as to whether he could now have his horses back, replied that he need only go down to the stable and get them. But even while crossing the courtyard, Kohlhaas learned with dismay that for alleged insolence his groom had been cudgeled and dismissed in disgrace a few days after being left behind at Tronka Castle. Of the boy who informed him of this he inquired what in the world the groom had done, and who had taken care of the horses in the mean time; to this the boy answered that he did not know, and then opened to the horse-dealer, whose heart was already full of misgivings, the door of the stable in which the horses stood. How great, though, was his astonishment when, instead of his two glossy, well-fed blacks, he spied a pair of lean, worn-out jades, with bones on which one could have hung things as if on pegs, and with mane and hair matted together from lack of care and attention — in short, the very picture of utter misery in the animal kingdom! Kohlhaas, at the sight of whom the horses neighed and moved feebly, was extremely indignant, and asked what had happened to his horses. The boy, who was standing beside him, answered that they had not suffered any harm, and that they had had proper feed too, but, as it had been harvest time, they had been used a bit in the fields because there weren't draught animals enough. Kohlhaas cursed over the shameful, preconcerted outrage; but realizing that he was powerless he suppressed his rage, and, as no other course lay open to him, was preparing to leave this den of thieves again with his horses when the castellan, attracted by the altercation, appeared and asked what was the matter.

"What's the matter?" echoed Kohlhaas. "Who gave Squire Tronka and his people permission to use for work in the fields the black horses that I left behind with him? He added, "Do you call that humane?" and trying to rouse the exhausted nags with a switch, he showed him that they did not move. The castellan, after he had watched him for a while with an expression of defiance, broke out, "Look at the ruffian! Ought not the churl to thank God that the jades are still alive?" He asked who would have been expected to take care of them when the groom had run away, and whether it were not just that the horses should have worked in the fields for their feed. He concluded by saying that Kohlhaas had better not make a rumpus or he would call the dogs and with them would manage to restore order in the courtyard.

The horse-dealer's heart thumped against his doublet. He felt a strong desire to throw the good-for-nothing, pot-bellied scoundrel into the mud and set his foot on his copper-colored face. But his sense of justice, which was as delicate as a gold-balance, still wavered; he was not yet quite sure before the bar of his own conscience whether his adversary were really guilty of a crime. And so, swallowing the abusive words and going over to the horses, he silently pondered the circumstances while arranging their manes, and asked in a subdued voice for what fault the groom had been turned out of the castle. The castellan replied, "Because the rascal was insolent in the courtyard; because he opposed a necessary change of stables and demanded that the horses of two young noblemen, who came to the castle, should, for the sake of his nags, be left out on the open high-road over night."

Kohlhaas would have given the value of the horses if he could have had the groom at hand to compare his statement with that of this thick-lipped castellan. He was still standing, straightening the tangled manes of the black horses, and wondering what could be done in the situation in which he found himself, when suddenly the scene changed, and Squire Wenzel Tronka, returning from hare-hunting, dashed into the courtyard, followed by a swarm of knights, grooms, and dogs. The castellan, when asked what had happened, immediately began to speak, and while, on the one hand, the dogs set up a murderous howl at the sight of the stranger, and, on the other, the knights sought to quiet them, he gave the Squire a maliciously garbled account of the turmoil the horse-dealer was making because his black horses had been used a little. He said, with a scornful laugh, that the horse-dealer refused to recognize the horses as his own.

Kohlhaas cried, "Your worship, those are not my horses. Those are not the horses which were worth thirty gold gulden! I want my well-fed, sound horses back again!"

The Squire, whose face grew momentarily pale, got down from his horse and said, "If the d——d scoundrel doesn't want to take the horses back, let him leave them here. Come, Gunther!" he called; "Hans, come!" He brushed the dust off his breeches with his hand and, just as he reached the door with the young knights, called "Bring wine!" and strode into the house.

Kohlhaas said that he would rather call the knacker and have his horses thrown into the carrion pit than lead them back, in that condition, to his stable at Kohlhaasenbrück. Without bothering himself further about the nags, he left them standing where they were, and, declaring that he should know how to get his rights, mounted his bay horse and rode away.

He was already galloping at full speed on the road to Dresden when, at the thought of the groom and of the complaint which had been made against him at the castle, he slowed down to a walk, and, before he had gone a thousand paces farther, turned his horse around again and took the road toward Kohlhaasenbrück, in order, as seemed to him wise and just, to hear first what the groom had to say. For in spite of the injuries he had suffered, a correct instinct, already familiar with the imperfect organization of the world, inclined him to put up with the loss of the horses and to regard it as a just consequence of the groom's misconduct in case there really could be imputed to the latter any such fault as the castellan charged. On the other hand, an equally admirable feeling took deeper and deeper root the farther he rode, hearing at every stop of the outrages perpetrated daily upon travelers at Tronka Castle; this instinct told him that if, as seemed probable, the whole incident proved to be a preconcerted plot, it was his duty to the world to make every effort to obtain for himself satisfaction for the injury suffered, and for his fellow-countrymen a guarantee against similar injuries in the future.

On his arrival at Kohlhaasenbrück, as soon as he had embraced his faithful wife Lisbeth and had kissed his children, who were shouting joyfully about his knees, he asked at once after Herse, the head groom, and whether anything had been heard from him. Lisbeth answered, "Oh yes, dearest Michael—that Herse! Just think! The poor fellow arrived here about a fortnight ago, most pitifully bruised and beaten; really, he was so battered that he couldn't even breathe freely. We put him to bed, where he kept coughing up blood, and after repeated questions we heard a story that no one could understand. He told us that you had left him at Tronka Castle in charge of some horses which they would not allow to pass through there, that by the most shameful maltreatment he had been forced to leave the castle, and that it had been impossible for him to bring the horses with him."

"Really!" exclaimed Kohlhaas, taking off his cloak. "I suppose he has recovered before this?"

"Pretty well, except that he still coughs blood," she answered. "I wanted to send another groom at once to Tronka Castle so as to have the horses taken care of until you got back there; for as Herse has always shown himself truthful and, indeed, more faithful to us than any other has ever been, I felt I had no right to doubt his statement, especially when confirmed by so many bruises, or to think that perhaps he had lost the horses in some other way. He implored me, however, not to require any one to go to that robber's nest, but to give the animals up if I didn't wish to sacrifice a man's life for them."

"And is he still abed?" asked Kohlhaas, taking off his neckcloth.

"He's been going about in the yard again for several days now," she answered. "In short, you will see for yourself," she continued, "that it's all quite true and that this incident is merely another one of those outrages that have been committed of late against strangers at Tronka Castle."

"I must first investigate that," answered Kohlhaas. "Call him in here, Lisbeth, if he is up and about." With these words he sat down in the arm-chair and his wife, delighted at his calmness, went and fetched the groom.

"What did you do at Tronka Castle," asked Kohlhaas, as Lisbeth entered the room with him. "I am not very well pleased with you."

On the groom's pale face spots of red appeared at these words. He was silent for a while—then he answered, "You are right there, Sir; for a sulphur cord, which by the will of Providence I was carrying in my pocket so as to set fire to the robber's nest from which I had been driven, I threw into the Elbe when I heard a child crying inside the castle, and I thought to myself, "Let God's lightning burn it down; I will not!"

Kohlhaas was disconcerted. "But for what cause were you driven from the castle?" he asked.

To this Herse answered, "Something very wrong, Sir," and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "What is done, however, can't be undone. I wouldn't let the horses be worked to death in the fields, and so I said that they were still young and had never been in harness."

Kohlhaas, trying to hide his perplexity, answered that he had not told the exact truth, as the horses had been in harness for a little while in the early part of the previous spring. "As you were a sort of guest at the castle," he continued, "you really might have been obliging once or twice whenever they happened not to have horses enough to get the crops in as fast as they wished."

"I did so, Sir," said Herse. "I thought, as long as they looked so sulky about it, that it wouldn't hurt the blacks for once, and so on the third afternoon I hitched them in front of the others and brought in three wagon-loads of grain from the fields."

Kohlhaas, whose heart was thumping, looked down at the ground and said, "They told me nothing about that, Herse!"

Herse assured him that it was so. "I wasn't disobliging save in my refusal to harness up the horses again when they had hardly eaten their fill at midday; then too, when the castellan and the steward offered to give me free fodder if I would do it, telling me to pocket the money that you had left with me to pay for feed, I answered that I would do something they didn't bargain for, turned around, and left them!"

"But surely it was not for that disobliging act that you were driven away from the castle," said Kohlhaas.

"Mercy, no!" cried the groom. "It was because of a very wicked crime! For the horses of two knights who came to the castle were put into the stable for the night and mine were tied to the stable door. And when I took the blacks from the castellan, who was putting the knights' horses into my stable, and asked where my animals were to go, he showed me a pigsty built of laths and boards against the castle wall."

"You mean," interrupted Kohlhaas, "that it was such a poor shelter for horses that it was more like a pigsty than a stable?"

"It was a pigsty, Sir," answered Herse; "really and truly a pigsty, with the pigs running in and out; I couldn't stand upright in it."

"Perhaps there was no other shelter to be found for the blacks," Kohlhaas rejoined; "and of course, in a way, the knights' horses had the right to better quarters."

"There wasn't much room," answered the groom, dropping his voice. "Counting these two, there were, in all, seven knights lodging at the castle. If it had been you, you would have had the horses moved closer together. I said I would try to rent a stable in the village, but the castellan objected that he had to keep the horses under his own eyes and told me not to dare to take them away from the courtyard."

"Hum!" said Kohlhaas. "What did you say to that?"

"As the steward said the two guests were only going to spend the night and continue on their way the next morning, I led the two horses into the pigsty. But the following day passed and they did not go, and on the third it was said the gentlemen were going to stay some weeks longer at the castle."

"After all, it was not so bad, Herse, in the pigsty, as it seemed to you when you first stuck your nose into it," said Kohlhaas.

"That's true," answered the groom. "After I had swept the place out a little, it wasn't so bad! I gave a groschen to the maid to have her put the pigs somewhere else; and by taking the boards from the roof-bars at dawn and laying them on again at night, I managed to arrange it so that the horses could stand upright in the daytime. So there they stood like geese in a coop, and stuck their heads through the roof, looking around for Kohlhaasenbrück or some other place where they would be better off.''

'' Well then,'' said Kohlhaas, '' why in the world did they drive you away? ''

'' Sir, I'll tell you,'' answered the groom, '' it was because they wanted to get rid of me, since, as long as I was there, they could not work the horses to death. Everywhere, in the yard, in the servants' hall, they made faces at me, and because I thought to myself, ' You can draw your jaws down until you dislocate them, for all I care,' they picked a quarrel and threw me out of the courtyard.''

'' But what provoked them? '' cried Kohlhaas; '' they must have had some sort of provocation! ''

'' Oh, to be sure,'' answered Herse; '' the best imaginable! On the evening of the second day spent in the pigsty, I took the horses, which had become dirty in spite of my efforts, and started to ride them down to the horse-pond. When I reached the castle-gate and was just about to turn, I heard the castellan and the steward, with servants, dogs and cudgels, rushing out of the servants' hall after me and calling, ' Stop thief! Stop gallows-bird! ' as if they were possessed. The gate-keeper stepped in front of me, and when I asked him and the raving crowd that was running at me, ' What in the world is the matter? '—' What's the matter! ' answered the castellan, seizing my two black horses by the bridle. ' Where are you going with the horses? ' he asked, and seized me by the chest. ' Where am I going? ' I repeated. ' Thunder and lightning! I am riding down to the horse-pond. Do you think that I—? '—' To the horse-pond! ' cried the castellan. ' I'll teach you, you swindler, to swim along the highroad back to Kohlhaasenbrück! ' And with a spiteful, vicious jerk he and the steward, who had caught me by the leg, hurled me down from the horse so that I measured my full length in the mud.

'Murder! Help!' I cried; 'breast straps and blankets and a bundle of linen belonging to me are in the stable.' But while the steward led the horses away, the castellan and servants fell upon me with their feet and whips and cudgels, so that I sank down behind the castle-gate half dead. And when I cried, 'The thieves! Where are they taking my horses?' and got to my feet—'Out of the courtyard with you!' screamed the castellan, 'Sick him, Caesar! Sick him, Hunter!' and, 'Sick him, Spitz!' he called, and a pack of more than twelve dogs rushed at me. Then I tore something from the fence, possibly a picket, and stretched out three dogs dead beside me! But when I had to give way because I was suffering from fearful wounds and bites, I heard a shrill whistle; the dogs scurried into the yard, the gates were swung shut and the bolt shot into position, and I sank down on the highroad unconscious."

Kohlhaas, white in the face, said with forced jocularity, "Didn't you really want to escape, Herse?" And as the latter, with a deep blush, looked down at the ground—"Confess to me!" said he; "You didn't like it in the pigsty; you thought to yourself, you would rather be in the stable at Kohlhaasenbrück, after all!"

"Od's thunder!" cried Herse; "breast strap and blankets I tell you, and a bundle of linen I left behind in the pigsty. Wouldn't I have taken along three gold gulden that I had wrapped in a red silk neckcloth and hidden away behind the manger? Blazes, hell, and the devil! When you talk like that, I'd like to relight at once the sulphur cord I threw away!"

"There, there!" said the horse-dealer, "I really meant no harm. What you have said—see here, I believe it word for word, and when the matter comes up, I am ready to take the Holy Communion myself as to its truth. I am sorry that you have not fared better in my service. Go, Herse, go back to bed. Have them bring you a bottle of wine and make yourself comfortable; you shall have justice done you!" With that he stood up, made out a list of the things which the head groom had left behind in the pigsty, jotted down the value of each, asked him how high he estimated the cost of his medical treatment, and sent him from the room after shaking hands with him once more.

Thereupon he recounted to Lisbeth, his wife, the whole course of the affair, explained the true relation of events, and declared to her that he was determined to demand public justice for himself. He had the satisfaction of finding that she heartily approved his purpose, for, she said, many other travelers, perhaps less patient than he, would pass by the castle, and it was doing God's work to put a stop to disorders such as these She added that she would manage to get together the money to pay the expenses of the lawsuit. Kohlhaas called her his brave wife, spent that day and the next very happily with her and the children, and, as soon as his business would at all permit it, set out for Dresden in order to lay his suit before the court.

Here, with the help of a lawyer whom he knew, he drew up a complaint, in which, after giving a detailed account of the outrage which Squire Wenzel Tronka had committed against him and against his groom Herse, he petitioned for the lawful punishment of the former, restoration of the horses to their original condition, and compensation for the damages which he and his groom had sustained. His case was indeed perfectly clear. The fact that the horses had been detained contrary to law threw a decisive light on everything else; and even had one been willing to assume that they had sickened by sheer accident, the demand of the horse-dealer to have them returned to him in sound condition would still have been just. While looking about him in the capital, Kohlhaas had no lack of friends, either, who promised to give his case lively support. His extensive trade in horses had secured him the acquaintance of the most important men of the country, and the honesty with which he conducted his business had won him their good will.

Kohlhaas dined cheerfully several times with his lawyer, who was himself a man of consequence, left a sum of money with him to defray the costs of the lawsuit and, fully reassured by the latter as to the outcome of the case, returned, after the lapse of some weeks, to his wife Lisbeth in Kohlhaasenbrück.

Nevertheless months passed, and the year was nearing its close before he received even a statement from Saxony concerning the suit which he had instituted there, let alone the final decree itself. After he had applied several times more to the court, he sent a confidential letter to his lawyer asking what was the cause of such undue delay. He was told in reply that the suit had been dismissed in the Dresden courts at the instance of an influential person. To the astonished reply of the horse-dealer asking what was the reason of this, the lawyer informed him that Squire Wenzel Tronka was related to two young noblemen, Hinz and Kunz Tronka, one of whom was Cup-bearer to the person of the sovereign, and the other actually Chamberlain. He also advised Kohlhaas not to make any further appeal to the court of law, but to try to regain possession of his horses which were still at Tronka Castle, giving him to understand that the Squire, who was then stopping in the capital, seemed to have ordered his people to deliver them to him. He closed with a request to excuse him from executing any further commissions in the matter, in case Kohlhaas refused to be content with this.

At this time Kohlhaas happened to be in Brandenburg, where the City Governor, Heinrich von Geusau, to whose jurisdiction Kohlhaasenbrück belonged, was busy establishing several charitable institutions for the sick and the poor out of a considerable fund which had fallen to the city. He was especially interested in fitting up, for the benefit of invalids, a mineral spring which rose in one of the villages in the vicinity, and which was thought to have greater powers than it subsequently proved to possess. As Kohlhaas had had numerous dealings with him at the time of his sojourn at Court and was therefore known to him, he allowed Herse, the head groom, who, ever since that unlucky day in Tronka Castle, had suffered pains in the chest when he breathed, to try the effect of the little healing spring, which had been inclosed and roofed over.

It so happened that the City Governor was just giving some directions, as he stood beside the depression in which Kohlhaas had placed Herse, when a messenger, whom the horse-dealer's wife had sent on after him, put in his hands the disheartening letter from his lawyer in Dresden. The City Governor, who, while speaking with the doctor, noticed that Kohlhaas let a tear fall on the letter he had just read, approached him and, in a friendly, cordial way, asked him what misfortune had befallen him. The horse-dealer handed him the letter without answering. The worthy Governor, knowing the abominable injustice done him at Tronka Castle as a result of which Herse was lying there before him sick, perhaps never to recover, clapped Kohlhaas on the shoulder and told him not to lose courage, for he would help him secure justice. In the evening, when the horse-dealer, acting upon his orders, came to the palace to see him, Kohlhaas was told that what he should do was to draw up a petition to the Elector of Brandenburg, with a short account of the incident, to inclose the lawyer's letter, and, on account of the violence which had been committed against him on Saxon territory, solicit the protection of the sovereign. He promised him to see that the petition would be delivered into the hands of the Elector together with another packet that was all ready to be dispatched; if circumstances permitted, the latter would, without fail, approach the Elector of Saxony on his behalf. Such a step would be quite sufficient to secure Kohlhaas justice at the hand of the tribunal at Dresden, in spite of the arts of the Squire and his partisans. Kohlhaas, much delighted, thanked the Governor very heartily for this new proof of his good will, and said he was only sorry that he had not instituted proceedings at once in Berlin without taking any steps in the matter at Dresden. After he had made out the complaint in due form at the office of the municipal court and delivered it to the Governor, he returned to Kohlhaasenbrück, more encouraged than ever about the outcome of his affair.

After only a few weeks, however, he was grieved to learn from a magistrate who had gone to Potsdam on business for the City Governor, that the Elector had handed the petition over to his Chancellor, Count Kallheim, and that the latter, instead of taking the course most likely to produce results and petitioning the Court at Dresden directly for investigation and punishment of the outrage, had, as a preliminary, applied to the Squire Tronka for further information.

The magistrate, who had stopped in his carriage outside of Kohlhaas' house and seemed to have been instructed to deliver this message to the horse-dealer, could give the latter no satisfactory answer to his perplexed question as to why this step had been taken. He was apparently in a hurry to continue his journey, and merely added that the Governor sent Kohlhaas word to be patient. Not until the very end of the short interview did the horse-dealer divine from some casual words he let fall, that Count Kallheim was related by marriage to the house of Tronka.

Kohlhaas, who no longer took any pleasure either in his horse-breeding, or his house or his farm, scarcely even in his wife and children, waited all the next month, full of gloomy forebodings as to the future. And, just as he had expected at the expiration of this time, Herse, somewhat benefited by the baths, came back from Brandenburg bringing a rather lengthy decree and a letter from the City Governor. The latter ran as follows: He was sorry that he could do nothing in Kohlhaas' behalf; he was sending him a decision from the Chancery of State and he advised him to fetch away the horses that he had left behind at the Tronka Castle, and then to let the matter drop.

The decree read as follows: "According to the report of the tribunal at Dresden, he was a good-for-nothing, quarrelsome person; the Squire with whom he had left the horses was not keeping them from him in any way; let him send to the castle and take them away, or at least inform the Squire where to send them to him; in any case he should not trouble the Chancery of the State with such petty quarrels and mischief-making.''

Kohlhaas, who was not concerned about the horses themselves — he would have felt just as much pain if it had been a question of a couple of dogs — Kohlhaas foamed with rage when he received this letter. As often as he heard a noise in the courtyard he looked toward the gateway with the most revolting feelings of anticipation that had ever agitated his breast, to see whether the servants of the Squire had come to restore to him, perhaps even with an apology, the starved and worn-out horses. This was the only situation which he felt that his soul, well disciplined though it had been by the world, was not prepared to meet.

A short time after, however, he heard from an acquaintance who had traveled that road, that at Tronka Castle his horses were still being used for work in the fields exactly like the Squire's other horses. Through the midst of the pain caused by beholding the world in a state of such monstrous disorder, shot the inward satisfaction of knowing that from henceforth he would be at peace with himself.

He invited a bailiff, who was his neighbor, to come to see him. The latter had long cherished the idea of enlarging his estate by purchasing the property which adjoined it. When he had seated himself Kohlhaas asked him how much he would give for his possessions on Brandenburg and Saxon territory, for house and farm, in a lump, immovable or not.

Lisbeth, his wife, grew pale when she heard his words. She turned around and picked up her youngest child who was playing on the floor behind her. While the child pulled at her kerchief, she darted glances of mortal terror past the little one's red cheeks, at the horse-dealer, and at a paper which he held in his hand.

The bailiff stared at his neighbor in astonishment and asked him what had suddenly given him such strange ideas; to which the horse-dealer, with as much gaiety as he could muster, replied that the idea of selling his farm on the banks of the Havel was not an entirely new one, but that they had often before discussed the subject together. As for his house in the outskirts of Dresden — in comparison with the farm it was only a tag end and need not be taken into consideration. In short, if the bailiff would do as he wished and take over both pieces of property, he was ready to close the contract with him. He added with rather forced pleasantry that Kohlhaasenbrück was not the world; that there might be objects in life compared with which that of taking care of his home and family as a father is supposed to would be a secondary and unworthy one. In a word, he must tell him that his soul was intent upon accomplishing great things, of which, perhaps, he would hear shortly. The bailiff, reassured by these words, said jokingly to Kohlhaas' wife, who was kissing her child repeatedly, "Surely he will not insist upon being paid immediately!" Then he laid his hat and cane, which he had been holding between his knees, on the table, and taking the paper, which the horse-dealer was holding in his hand, began to read. Kohlhaas, moving closer to him, explained that it was a contingent contract to purchase, drawn up by himself, his right to cancel the contract expiring in four weeks. He showed the bailiff that nothing was wanting but the signatures, the insertion of the purchase-price itself, and the amount of the forfeit that he, Kohlhaas, would agree to pay in case he should withdraw from the contract within the four weeks' time. Again Kohlhaas gaily urged his friend to make an offer, assuring him that he would be reasonable and would make the conditions easy for him. His wife was walking up and down the room; she breathed so hard that the kerchief, at which the boy had been pulling, threatened to fall clear off her shoulder. The bailiff said that he really had no way of judging the value of the property in Dresden; whereupon Kohlhaas, shoving toward him some letters which had been exchanged at the time of its purchase, answered that he estimated it at one hundred gold gulden, although the letters would show that it had cost him almost half as much again. The bailiff who, on reading the deed of sale, found that, strangely enough, he too was guaranteed the privilege of withdrawing from the bargain, had already half made up his mind; but he said that, of course, he could make no use of the stud-horses which were in the stables. When Kohlhaas replied that he wasn't at all inclined to part with the horses either, and that he also desired to keep for himself some weapons which were hanging in the armory, the bailiff still continued to hesitate for some time. At last he repeated an offer that, once before, when they were out walking together, he had made him, half in jest and half in earnest — a trifling offer indeed, in comparison with the value of the property. Kohlhaas pushed the pen and ink over for him to sign, and when the bailiff, who could not believe his senses, again inquired if he were really in earnest, and the horse-dealer asked, a little sensitively, whether he thought that he was only jesting with him, then took up the pen, though with a very serious face, and wrote. However, he crossed out the clause concerning the sum to be forfeited in case the seller should repent of the transaction, bound himself to a loan of one hundred gold gulden on a mortgage on the Dresden property, which he absolutely refused to buy outright, and allowed Kohlhaas full liberty to withdraw from the transaction at any time within two months.

The horse-dealer, touched by this conduct, shook his hand with great cordiality, and after they had furthermore agreed on the principal conditions, to the effect that a fourth part of the purchase-price should without fail be paid immediately in cash, and the balance paid into the Hamburg bank in three months' time, Kohlhaas called for wine in order to celebrate such a happy conclusion of the bargain. He told the maid-servant who entered with the bottles, to order Sternbald, the groom, to saddle the chestnut horse for him, as he had to ride to the capital, where he had some business to attend to. He gave them to understand that, in a short time, when he returned, he would talk more frankly concerning what he must for the present continue to keep to himself. As he poured out the wine into the glasses, he asked about the Poles and the Turks who were just then at war, and involved the bailiff in many political conjectures on the subject; then, after finally drinking once more to the success of their business, he allowed the latter to depart.

When the bailiff had left the room, Lisbeth fell down on her knees before her husband. "If you have any affection for me," she cried, "and for the children whom I have borne you; if you have not already, for what reason I know not, cast us out from your heart, then tell me what these horrible preparations mean!"

Kohlhaas answered, "Dearest wife, they mean nothing which need cause you any alarm, as matters stand at present. I have received a decree in which I am told that my complaint against the Squire Wenzel Tronka is a piece of impertinent mischief-making. As there must exist some misunderstanding in this matter, I have made up my mind to present my complaint once more, this time in person, to the sovereign himself."

"But why will you sell your house?" she cried, rising with a look of despair.

The horse-dealer, clasping her tenderly to his breast, answered, "Because, dear Lisbeth, I do not care to remain in a country where they will not protect me in my rights. If I am to be kicked I would rather be a dog than a man! I am sure that my wife thinks about this just as I do."

"How do you know," she asked wildly, "that they will not protect you in your rights? If, as is becoming, you approach the Elector humbly with your petition, how do you know that it will be thrown aside or answered by a refusal to listen to you?"

"Very well!" answered Kohlhaas; "if my fears on the subject are unfounded, my house isn't sold yet, either. The Elector himself is just, I know, and if I can only succeed in getting past those who surround him and in reaching his person, I do not doubt that I shall secure justice, and that, before the week is out, I shall return joyfully home again to you and my old trade. In that case I would gladly stay with you," he added, kissing her, "until the end of my life! But it is advisable," he continued, "to be prepared for any emergency, and for that reason I should like you, if it is possible, to go away for a while with the children to your aunt in Schwerin, whom, moreover, you have, for some time, been intending to visit!"

"What!" cried the housewife; "I am to go to Schwerin — to go across the frontier with the children to my aunt in Schwerin?" Terror choked her words.

"Certainly," answered Kohlhaas, "and, if possible, right away, so that I may not be hindered by any family considerations in the steps I intend to take in my suit."

"Oh, I understand you!" she cried. "You now need nothing but weapons and horses; whoever will may take everything else!" With this she turned away and, in tears, flung herself down on a chair.

Kohlhaas exclaimed in alarm, "Dearest Lisbeth, what are you doing? God has blessed me with wife and children and worldly goods; am I today for the first time to wish that it were otherwise?" He sat down gently beside his wife, who at these words had flushed up and fallen on his neck. "Tell me!" said he, smoothing the curls away from her forehead. "What shall I do? Shall I give up my case? Do you wish me to go to Tronka Castle, beg the knight to restore the horses to me, mount and ride them back home?"

Lisbeth did not dare to cry out, "Yes, yes, yes!" She shook her head, weeping, and, clasping him close, kissed him passionately.

"Well, then," cried Kohlhaas, "if you feel that, in case

I am to continue my trade, justice must be done me, do not deny me the liberty which I must have in order to procure it!"

With that he stood up and said to the groom who had come to tell him that the chestnut horse was saddled, "To-morrow the bay horses must be harnessed up to take my wife to Schwerin." Lisbeth said that she had an idea! She rose, wiped the tears from her eyes, and, going over to the desk where he had seated himself, asked him if he would give her the petition and let her go to Berlin in his stead and hand it to the Elector. For more reasons than one Kohlhaas was deeply moved by this change of attitude. He drew her down on his lap, and said, "Dearest wife, that is hardly practicable. The sovereign is surrounded by a great many people; whoever wishes to approach him is exposed to many annoyances."

Lisbeth rejoined that, in a thousand cases, it was easier for a woman to approach him than it was for a man. "Give me the petition," she repeated, "and if all that you wish is the assurance that it shall reach his hands, I vouch for it; he shall receive it!"

Kohlhaas, who had had many proofs of her courage as well as of her wisdom, asked her how she intended to go about it. To this she answered, looking shamefacedly at the ground, that the castellan of the Elector's palace had paid court to her in former days, when he had been in service in Schwerin; that, to be sure, he was married now and had several children, but that she was not yet entirely forgotten, and, in short, her husband should leave it to her to take advantage of this circumstance as well as of many others which it would require too much time to enumerate. Kohlhaas kissed her joyfully, said that he accepted her proposal, and informed her that for her to lodge with the wife of the castellan would be all that was necessary to enable her to approach the sovereign inside the palace itself. Then he gave her the petition, had the bay horses harnessed, and sent her off, well bundled up, accompanied by Sternbald, his faithful groom.

Of all the unsuccessful steps, however, which he had taken in regard to his suit, this journey was the most unfortunate. For only a few days later Sternbald entered the courtyard again, leading the horses at a walk before the wagon, in which lay his wife, stretched out, with a dangerous contusion of the chest. Kohlhaas, who approached the wagon with a white face, could learn nothing coherent concerning the cause of the accident. The castellan, the groom said, had not been at home; they had therefore been obliged to put up at an inn that stood near the palace. Lisbeth had left this inn on the following morning, ordering the servant to stay behind with the horses; not until evening had she returned, and then only in this condition. It seemed she had pressed forward too boldly toward the person of the sovereign, and without any fault of his, but merely through the rough zeal of a body-guard which surrounded him, she had received a blow on the chest with the shaft of a lance. At least this was what the people said who, toward evening, had brought her back unconscious to the inn; for she herself could talk but little for the blood which flowed from her mouth. The petition had been taken from her afterward by a knight. Sternbald said that it had been his wish to jump on a horse at once and bring the news of the unfortunate accident to his master, but, in spite of the remonstrances of the surgeon who had been called in, she had insisted on being taken back to her husband at Kohlhaasenbrück without previously sending him word. She was completely exhausted by the journey and Kohlhaas put her to bed, where she lived a few days longer, struggling painfully to draw breath.

They tried in vain to restore her to consciousness in order to learn the particulars of what had occurred; she lay with fixed, already glassy eyes, and gave no answer.

Once only, shortly before her death, did she recover consciousness. A minister of the Lutheran church (which religion, then in its infancy, she had embraced, following the example of her husband) was standing beside her bed, reading in a loud solemn voice, full of emotion, a chapter of the Bible, when she suddenly looked up at him with a stern expression, and, taking the Bible out of his hand, as though there were no need to read to her from it, turned over the leaves for some time and seemed to be searching for some special passage. At last, with her fore-finger she pointed out to Kohlhaas, who was sitting beside her bed, the verse: "Forgive your enemies; do good to them that hate you." As she did so she pressed his hand with a look full of deep and tender feeling, and passed away.

Kohlhaas thought, "May God never forgive me the way I forgive the Squire!" Then he kissed her amid freely flowing tears, closed her eyes, and left the chamber.

He took the hundred gold gulden which the bailiff had already sent him for the stables in Dresden, and ordered a funeral ceremony that seemed more suitable for a princess than for her — an oaken coffin heavily trimmed with metal, cushions of silk with gold and silver tassels, and a grave eight yards deep lined with stones and mortar. He himself stood beside the vault with his youngest child in his arms and watched the work. On the day of the funeral the corpse, white as snow, was placed in a room which he had had draped with black cloth.

The minister had just completed a touching address by the side of the bier when the sovereign's answer to the petition which the dead woman had presented was delivered to Kohlhaas. By this decree he was ordered to fetch the horses from Tronka Castle and, under pain of imprisonment, not to bring any further action in the matter. Kohlhaas put the letter in his pocket and had the coffin carried out to the hearse.

As soon as the mound had been raised, the cross planted on it, and the guests who had been present at the interment had taken their departure, Kohlhaas flung himself down once more before his wife's empty bed, and then set about the business of revenge.

He sat down and made out a decree in which, by virtue of his own innate authority, he condemned the Squire Wenzel Tronka within the space of three days after sight to lead back to Kohlhaasenbrück the two black horses which he had taken from him and over-worked in the fields, and with his own hands to feed the horses in Kohlhaas' stables until they were fat again. This decree he sent off to the Squire by a mounted messenger, and instructed the latter to return to Kohlhaasenbrück as soon as he had delivered the document.

As the three days went by without the horses being returned, Kohlhaas called Herse and informed him of what he had ordered the Squire to do in regard to fattening them. Then he asked Herse two questions: first, whether he would ride with him to Tronka Castle and fetch the Squire; and, secondly, whether Herse would be willing to apply the whip to the young gentleman after he had been brought to the stables at Kohlhaasenbrück, in case he should be remiss in carrying out the conditions of the decree. As soon as Herse understood what was meant he shouted joyfully—"Sir, this very day!" and, throwing his hat into the air, he cried that he was going to have a thong with ten knots plaited in order to teach the Squire how to curry-comb. After this Kohlhaas sold the house, packed the children into a wagon, and sent them over the border. When darkness fell he called the other servants together, seven in number, and every one of them true as gold to him, armed them and provided them with mounts and set out for the Tronka Castle.

At night-fall of the third day, with this little troop he rode down the toll-gatherer and the gate-keeper who were standing in conversation in the arched gateway, and attacked the castle. They set fire to all the outbuildings in the castle inclosure, and, while, amid the outburst of the flames, Herse hurried up the winding staircase into the tower of the castellan's quarters, and with blows and stabs fell upon the castellan and the steward who were sitting, half dressed, over the cards, Kohlhaas at the same time dashed into the castle in search of the Squire Wenzel. Thus it is that the angel of judgment descends from heaven; the Squire, who, to the accompaniment of immoderate laughter, was just reading aloud to a crowd of young friends the decree which the horse-dealer had sent to him, had no sooner heard the sound of his voice in the courtyard than, turning suddenly pale as death, he cried out to the gentlemen — "Brothers, save yourselves!" and disappeared. As Kohlhaas entered the room he seized by the shoulders a certain Squire, Hans Tronka, who came at him, and flung him into the corner of the room with such force that his brains spurted out over the stone floor. While the other knights, who had drawn their weapons, were being overpowered and scattered by the grooms, Kohlhaas asked where the Squire Wenzel Tronka was. Realizing the ignorance of the stunned men, he kicked open the doors of two apartments leading into the wings of the castle and, after searching in every direction throughout the rambling building and finding no one, he went down, cursing, into the castle yard, in order to place guards at the exits.

In the meantime, from the castle and the wings, which had caught fire from the out-buildings, thick columns of smoke were rising heavenward. While Sternbald and three busy grooms were gathering together everything in the castle that was not fastened securely and throwing it down among the horses as fair spoils, from the open windows of the castellan's quarters the corpses of the castellan and the steward, with their wives and children, were flung down into the courtyard amid the joyful shouts of Herse. As Kohlhaas descended the steps of the castle, the gouty old housekeeper who managed the Squire's establishment threw herself at his feet. Pausing on the step, he asked her where the Squire Wenzel Tronka was. She answered in a faint trembling voice that she thought he had taken refuge in the chapel. Kohlhaas then called two men with torches, and, since they had no keys, he had the door broken open with crowbars and axes. He knocked over altars and pews; nevertheless, to his anger and grief, he did not find the Squire.

It happened that, at the moment when Kohlhaas came out of the chapel, a young servant, one of the retainers of the castle, came hurrying upon his way to get the Squire's chargers out of a large stone stable which was threatened by the flames. Kohlhaas, who at that very moment spied his two blacks in a little shed roofed with straw, asked the man why he did not rescue the two blacks. The latter, sticking the key in the stable-door, answered that he surely must see that the shed was already in flames. Kohlhaas tore the key violently from the stable-door, threw it over the wall, and, raining blows as thick as hail on the man with the flat of his sword, drove him into the burning shed and, amid the horrible laughter of the bystanders, forced him to rescue the black horses. Nevertheless, when the man, pale with fright, reappeared with the horses, only a few moments before the shed fell in behind him, he no longer found Kohlhaas. Betaking himself to the men gathered in the castle inclosure, he asked the horse-dealer, who several times turned his back on him, what he was to do with the animals now.

Kohlhaas suddenly raised his foot with such terrible force that the kick, had it landed, would have meant death; then, without answering, he mounted his bay horse, stationed himself under the gateway of the castle, and, while his men continued their work of destruction, silently awaited the break of day.

When the morning dawned the entire castle had burned down and only the walls remained standing; no one was left in it but Kohlhaas and his seven men. He dismounted from his horse and, in the bright sunlight which illuminated every crack and corner, once more searched the inclosure. When he had to admit, hard though it was for him to do so, that the expedition against the castle had failed, with a heart full of pain and grief he sent Herse and some of the other men to gather news of the direction in which the

Squire had fled. He felt especially troubled about a rich nunnery for ladies of rank, Erlabrunn by name, which was situated on the shores of the Mulde, and whose abbess, Antonia Tronka, was celebrated in the neighborhood as a pious, charitable, and saintly woman. The unhappy Kohlhaas thought it only too probable that the Squire, stripped as he was of all necessities, had taken refuge in this nunnery, since the abbess was his own aunt and had been his governess in his early childhood. After informing himself of these particulars, Kohlhaas ascended the tower of the castellan's quarters in the interior of which there was still a habitable room, and there he drew up a so-called " Kohlhaas mandate " in which he warned the country not to offer assistance to Squire Wenzel Tronka, against whom he was waging just warfare, and, furthermore, commanded every inhabitant, instead, relatives and friends not excepted, to surrender him under penalty of death and the inevitable burning down of everything that might be called property.

This declaration he scattered broadcast in the surrounding country through travelers and strangers; he even went so far as to give Waldmann, his servant, a copy of it, with definite instructions to carry it to Erlabrunn and place it in the hands of Lady Antonia. Thereupon he had a talk with some of the servants of Tronka Castle who were dissatisfied with the Squire and, attracted by the prospect of plunder, wished to enter the horse-dealer's service. He armed them after the manner of foot-soldiers, with cross-bows and daggers, taught them how to mount behind the men on horseback, and after he had turned into money everything that the company had collected and had distributed it among them, he spent some hours in the gateway of the castle, resting after his sorry labor.

Toward midday Herse came and confirmed what Kohlhaas' heart, which was always filled with the most gloomy forebodings, had already told him — namely, that the Squire was then in the nunnery of Erlabrunn with the old

Lady Antonia Tronka, his aunt. It seemed that, through a door in the rear wall behind the castle, leading into the open air, he had escaped down a narrow stone stairway which, protected by a little roof, ran down to a few boats on the Elbe. At least, Herse reported that at midnight the Squire in a skiff without rudder or oars had arrived at a village on the Elbe, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants who were assembled on account of the fire at Tronka Castle and that he had gone on toward Erlabrunn in a village cart.

Kohlhaas sighed deeply at this news; he asked whether the horses had been fed, and when they answered "Yes," he had his men mount, and in three hours' time he was at the gates of Erlabrunn. Amid the rumbling of a distant storm on the horizon, he and his troop entered the courtyard of the convent with torches which they had lighted before reaching the spot. Just as Waldmann, his servant, came forward to announce that the mandate had been duly delivered, Kohlhaas saw the abbess and the chapter-warden step out under the portal of the nunnery, engaged in agitated conversation. While the chapter-warden, a little old man with snow-white hair, shooting furious glances at Kohlhaas, was having his armor put on and, in a bold voice, called to the men-servants surrounding him to ring the storm-bell, the abbess, white as a sheet, and holding the silver image of the Crucified One in her hand, descended the sloping driveway and, with all her nuns, flung herself down before Kohlhaas' horse.

Herse and Sternbald overpowered the chapter-warden, who had no sword in his hand, and led him off as a prisoner among the horses, while Kohlhaas asked the abbess where Squire Wenzel Tronka was. She unfastened from her girdle a large ring of keys, and answered, "In Wittenberg, Kohlhaas, worthy man!"—adding, in a shaking voice, "Fear God, and do no wrong!" Kohlhaas, plunged back into the hell of unsatisfied thirst for revenge, wheeled his horse and was about to cry, "Set fire to the buildings!"

when a terrific thunder-bolt struck close beside him. Turning his horse around again toward the abbess he asked her whether she had received his mandate. The lady answered in a weak, scarcely audible voice—" Just a few moments ago!" "When?" "Two hours after the Squire, my nephew, had taken his departure, as truly as God is my help!" When Waldmann, the groom, to whom Kohlhaas turned with a lowering glance, stammered out a confirmation of this fact, saying that the waters of the Mulde, swollen by the rain, had prevented his arriving until a few moments ago, Kohlhaas came to his senses. A sudden, terrible downpour of rain, sweeping across the pavement of the courtyard and extinguishing the torches, relaxed the tension of the unhappy man's grief; doffing his hat curtly to the abbess, he wheeled his horse, dug in his spurs, calling "Follow me, my brothers; the Squire is in Wittenberg," and left the nunnery.

The night having set in, he stopped at an inn on the highroad, and had to rest here for a day because the horses were so exhausted. As he clearly saw that with a troop of ten men (for his company numbered that many now) he could not defy a place like Wittenberg, he drew up a second mandate, in which, after a short account of what had happened to him in the land, he summoned "every good Christian," as he expressed it, to whom he "solemnly promised bounty-money and other perquisites of war, to take up his quarrel against Squire Tronka as the common enemy of all Christians." In another mandate which appeared shortly after this he called himself "a free gentleman of the Empire and of the World, subject only to God"—an example of morbid and misplaced fanaticism which, nevertheless, with the sound of his money and the prospect of plunder, procured him a crowd of recruits from among the rabble, whom the peace with Poland had deprived of a livelihood. In fact, he had thirty-odd men when he crossed back to the right side of the Elbe, bent upon reducing Wittenberg to ashes.

He encamped with horses and men in an old tumble-down brick-kiln, in the solitude of a dense forest which surrounded the town at that time. No sooner had Sternbald, whom he had sent in disguise into the city with the mandate, brought him word that it was already known there, than he set out with his troop on the eve of Whitsuntide; and while the citizens lay sound asleep, he set the town on fire at several points simultaneously. At the same time, while his men were plundering the suburbs, he fastened a paper to the door-post of a church to the effect that " he, Kohlhaas, had set the city on fire, and if the Squire were not delivered to him he would burn down the city so completely that," as he expressed it, " he would not need to look behind any wall to find him."

The terror of the citizens at such an unheard-of outrage was indescribable, though, as it was fortunately a rather calm summer night, the flames had not destroyed more than nineteen buildings, among which, however, was a church. Toward daybreak, as soon as the fire had been partially extinguished, the aged Governor of the province, Otto von Gorgas, sent out immediately a company of fifty men to capture the bloodthirsty madman. The captain in command of the company, Gerstenberg by name, bore himself so badly, however, that the whole expedition, instead of subduing Kohlhaas, rather helped him to a most dangerous military reputation. For the captain separated his men into several divisions, with the intention of surrounding and crushing Kohlhaas; but the latter, holding his troop together, attacked and beat him at isolated points, so that by the evening of the following day, not a single man of the whole company in which the hopes of the country were centred, remained in the field against him. Kohlhaas, who had lost some of his men in these fights, again set fire to the city on the morning of the next day, and his murderous measures were so well taken that once more a number of houses and almost all the barns in the suburbs were burned down. At the same time he again posted the well-known mandate, this time, furthermore, on the corners of the city hall itself, and he added a notice concerning the fate of Captain von Gerstenberg who had been sent against him by the Governor, and whom he had overwhelmingly defeated.

The Governor of the province, highly incensed at this defiance, placed himself with several knights at the head of a troop of one hundred and fifty men. At a written request he gave Squire Wenzel Tronka a guard to protect him from the violence of the people, who flatly insisted that he must be removed from the city. After the Governor had had guards placed in all the villages in the vicinity, and also had sentinels stationed on the city walls to prevent a surprise, he himself set out on Saint Gervaise's day to capture the dragon who was devastating the land. The horse-dealer was clever enough to keep out of the way of this troop. By skilfully executed marches he enticed the Governor five leagues away from the city, and by means of various manœuvres he gave the other the mistaken notion that, hard pressed by superior numbers, he was going to throw himself into Brandenburg. Then, when the third night closed in, he made a forced ride back to Wittenberg, and for the third time set fire to the city. Herse, who crept into the town in disguise, carried out this horrible feat of daring, and because of a sharp north wind that was blowing, the fire proved so destructive and spread so rapidly that in less than three hours forty-two houses, two churches, several convents and schools, and the very residence of the electoral governor of the province were reduced to ruins and ashes.

The Governor who, when the day broke, believed his adversary to be in Brandenburg, returned by forced marches when informed of what had happened, and found the city in a general uproar. The people were massed by thousands around the Squire's house, which was barricaded with heavy timbers and posts, and with wild cries they demanded his expulsion from the city. Two burgomasters, Jenkens and Otto by name, who were present in their official dress at the head of the entire city council, tried in vain to explain that they absolutely must await the return of a courier who had been dispatched to the President of the Chancery of State for permission to send the Squire to Dresden, whither he himself, for many reasons, wished to go. The unreasoning crowd, armed with pikes and staves, cared nothing for these words. After handling rather roughly some councilors who were insisting upon the adoption of vigorous measures, the mob was about to storm the house where the Squire was and level it to the ground, when the Governor, Otto von Gorgas, appeared in the city at the head of his troopers. This worthy gentleman, who was wont by his mere presence to inspire people to respectful obedience, had, as though in compensation for the failure of the expedition from which he was returning, succeeded in taking prisoner three stray members of the incendiary's band, right in front of the gates of the city. While the prisoners were being loaded with chains before the eyes of the people, he made a clever speech to the city councilors, assuring them that he was on Kohlhaas' track and thought that he would soon be able to bring the incendiary himself in chains. By force of all these reassuring circumstances he succeeded in allaying the fears of the assembled crowd and in partially reconciling them to the presence of the Squire until the return of the courier from Dresden. He dismounted from his horse and, accompanied by some knights, entered the house after the posts and stockades had been cleared away. He found the Squire, who was falling from one faint into another, in the hands of two doctors, who with essences and stimulants were trying to restore him to consciousness. As Sir Otto von Gorgas realized that this was not the moment to exchange any words with him on the subject of the behavior of which he had been guilty, he merely told him, with a look of quiet contempt, to dress himself, and, for his own safety, to follow him to the apartments of the knight's prison. They put a doublet and a helmet on the Squire and when, with chest half bare on account of the difficulty he had in breathing, he appeared in the street on the arm of the Governor and his brother-in-law, the Count of Gerschau, blasphemous and horrible curses against him rose to heaven. The mob, whom the lansquenets found it very difficult to restrain, called him a bloodsucker, a miserable public pest and a tormentor of men, the curse of the city of Wittenberg, and the ruin of Saxony. After a wretched march through the devastated city, in the course of which the Squire's helmet fell off several times without his missing it and had to be replaced on his head by the knight who was behind him, they reached the prison at last, where he disappeared into a tower under the protection of a strong guard. Meanwhile the return of the courier with the decree of the Elector had aroused fresh alarm in the city. For the Saxon government, to which the citizens of Dresden had made direct application in an urgent petition, refused to permit the Squire to sojourn in the electoral capital before the incendiary had been captured. The Governor was instructed rather to use all the power at his command to protect the Squire just where he was, since he had to stay somewhere, but in order to pacify the good city of Wittenberg, the inhabitants were informed that a force of five hundred men under the command of Prince Friedrich of Meissen was already on the way to protect them from further molestation on the part of Kohlhaas.

The Governor saw clearly that a decree of this kind was wholly inadequate to pacify the people. For not only had several small advantages gained by the horse-dealer in skirmishes outside the city sufficed to spread extremely disquieting rumors as to the size to which his band had grown; his way of waging warfare with ruffians in disguise who slunk about under cover of darkness with pitch, straw, and sulphur, unheard of and quite without precedent as it was, would have rendered ineffectual an even larger protecting force than the one which was advancing under the Prince of Meissen. After reflecting a short time, the Governor determined therefore to suppress altogether the decree he had received; he merely posted at all the street corners a letter from the Prince of Meissen, announcing his arrival. At daybreak a covered wagon left the courtyard of the knight's prison and took the road to Leipzig, accompanied by four heavily armed troopers who, in an indefinite sort of way, let it be understood that they were bound for the Pleissenburg. The people having thus been satisfied on the subject of the ill-starred Squire, whose existence seemed identified with fire and sword, the Governor himself set out with a force of three hundred men to join Prince Friedrich of Meissen. In the mean time Kohlhaas, thanks to the strange position which he had assumed in the world, had in truth increased the numbers of his band to one hundred and nine men, and he had also collected in Jessen a store of weapons with which he had fully armed them. When informed of the two tempests that were sweeping down upon him, he decided to go to meet them with the speed of the hurricane before they should join to overwhelm him. In accordance with this plan he attacked the Prince of Meissen the very next night, surprising him near Mühlberg. In this fight, to be sure, he was greatly grieved to lose Herse, who was struck down at his side by the first shots but, embittered by this loss, in a three-hour battle he so roughly handled the Prince of Meissen, who was unable to collect his forces in the town, that at break of day the latter was obliged to take the road back to Dresden, owing to several severe wounds which he had received and the complete disorder into which his troops had been thrown. Kohlhaas, made foolhardy by this victory, turned back to attack the Governor before the latter could learn of it, fell upon him at midday in the open country near the village of Damerow, and fought him until nightfall, with murderous losses, to be sure, but with corresponding success. Indeed, the next morning he would certainly with the remnant of his band have renewed the attack on the Governor, who had thrown himself into the churchyard at

Damerow, if the latter had not received through spies the news of the defeat of the Prince at Mühlberg and therefore deemed it wiser to return to Wittenberg to await a more propitious moment.

Five days after the dispersion of these two bodies of troops, Kohlhaas arrived before Leipzig and set fire to the city on three different sides. In the mandate which he scattered broadcast on this occasion he called himself "a vicegerent of the archangel Michael who had come to visit upon all who, in this controversy, should take the part of the Squire, punishment by fire and sword for the villainy into which the whole world was plunged." At the same time, having surprised the castle at Lützen and fortified himself in it, he summoned the people to join him and help establish a better order of things. With a sort of insane fanaticism the mandate was signed: "Done at the seat of our provisional world government, our ancient castle at Lützen."

As the good fortune of the inhabitants of Leipzig would have it, the fire, owing to a steady rain which was falling, did not spread, so that, thanks to the rapid action of the means at hand for extinguishing fires, only a few small shops which lay around the Pleissenburg went up in flames; nevertheless the presence of the desperate incendiary, and his erroneous impression that the Squire was in Leipzig, caused unspeakable consternation in the city. When a troop of one hundred and eighty men at arms that had been sent against him returned defeated, nothing else remained for the city councilors, who did not wish to jeopardize the wealth of the place, but to bar the gates completely and set the citizens to keep watch day and night outside the walls. In vain the city council had declarations posted in the villages of the surrounding country, with the positive assurance that the Squire was not in the Pleissenburg. The horse-dealer, in similar manifestos, insisted that he was in the Pleissenburg and declared that if the Squire were not there, he, Kohlhaas, would at any rate proceed as though he were until he should have been told the name of the place where his enemy was to be found. The Elector, notified by courier of the straits to which the city of Leipzig was reduced, declared that he was already gathering a force of two thousand men and would put himself at their head in order to capture Kohlhaas. He administered to Sir Otto von Gorgas a severe rebuke for the misleading and ill-considered artifice to which he had resorted to rid the vicinity of Wittenberg of the incendiary. Nor can any one describe the confusion which seized all Saxony, and especially the electoral capital, when it was learned there that in all the villages near Leipzig a declaration addressed to Kohlhaas had been placarded, no one knew by whom, to the effect that "Wenzel, the Squire, was with his cousins Hinz and Kunz in Dresden."

It was under these circumstances that Doctor Martin Luther, supported by the authority which his position in the world gave him, undertook the task of forcing Kohlhaas, by the power of kindly words, back within the limits set by the social order of the day. Building upon an element of good in the breast of the incendiary, he had posted in all the cities and market-towns of the Electorate a placard addressed to him, which read as follows:

"Kohlhaas, thou who claimest to be sent to wield the sword of justice, what is it that thou, presumptuous man, art making bold to attempt in the madness of thy stone-blind passion — thou who art filled from head to foot with injustice? Because the sovereign, to whom thou art subject, has denied thee thy rights — thy rights in the struggle for a paltry trifle — thou arisest, godless man, with fire and sword, and like a wolf of the wilderness dost burst upon the peaceful community which he protects. Thou, who misleadest men with this declaration full of untruthfulness and guile, dost thou think, sinner, to satisfy God therewith in that future day which shall shine into the recesses of every heart? How canst thou say that thy rights have been denied thee — thou, whose savage breast, animated by the inordinate desire for base revenge, completely gave up the endeavor to procure justice after the first half-hearted attempts, which came to naught? Is a bench full of constables and beadles who suppress a letter that is presented, or who withhold a judgment that they should deliver — is this thy supreme authority? And must I tell thee, impious man, that the supreme authority of the land knows nothing whatever about thine affair — nay, more, that the sovereign against whom thou art rebelling does not even know thy name, so that when thou shalt one day come before the throne of God thinking to accuse him, he will be able to say with a serene countenance, 'I have done no wrong to this man, Lord, for my soul is ignorant of his existence.' Know that the sword which thou wieldest is the sword of robbery and bloodthirstiness. A rebel art thou, and no warrior of the righteous God; wheel and gallows are thy goal on earth — gallows and, in the life to come, damnation which is ordained for crime and godlessness.

Wittenberg, etc. MARTIN LUTHER."

When Sternbald and Waldmann, to their great consternation, discovered the placard which had been affixed to the gateway of the castle at Lützen during the night, Kohlhaas within the castle was just revolving in his distracted mind a new plan for the burning of Leipzig — for he placed no faith in the notices posted in the villages announcing that Squire Wenzel was in Dresden, since they were not signed by any one, let alone by the municipal council, as he had required. For several days the two men hoped in vain that Kohlhaas would perceive Luther's placard, for they did not care to approach him on the subject. Gloomy and absorbed in thought, he did indeed, in the evening, appear, but only to give his brief commands, and he noticed nothing. Finally one morning, when he was about to have two of his followers strung up for plundering in the vicinity against his express orders, Sternbald and Waldmann determined to call his attention to it. With the pomp which he had adopted since his last manifesto — a large cherubim's sword on a red leather cushion, ornamented with golden tassels, borne before him, and twelve men with burning torches following him — Kohlhaas was just returning from the place of execution, while the people on both sides timidly made way for him. At that moment the two men, with their swords under their arms, walked, in a way that could not fail to excite his surprise, around the pillar to which the placard was attached.

When Kohlhaas, sunk in thought and with his hands folded behind his back, came under the portal, he raised his eyes and started back in surprise, and as the two men at sight of him drew back respectfully, he advanced with rapid steps to the pillar, watching them absent-mindedly. But who can describe the storm of emotion in his soul when he beheld there the paper accusing him of injustice, signed by the most beloved and honored name he knew — the name of Martin Luther! A dark flush spread over his face; taking off his helmet he read the document through twice from beginning to end, then walked back among his men with irresolute glances as though he were about to speak, yet said nothing. He unfastened the paper from the pillar, read it through once again, and cried, "Waldmann! have my horse saddled!" — then, "Sternbald, follow me into the castle!" and with that he disappeared. It had needed but these few words of that godly man to disarm him suddenly in the midst of all the dire destruction that he was plotting.

He threw on the disguise of a Thuringian farmer and told Sternbald that a matter of the greatest importance obliged him to go to Wittenberg. In the presence of some of his most trustworthy men he turned over to Sternbald the command of the band remaining in Lützen, and with the assurance that he would be back in three days, during which time no attack was to be feared, he departed for Wittenberg. He put up at an inn under an assumed name, and at nightfall, wrapped in his cloak and provided with a brace of pistols which he had taken at the sack of Tronka

Castle, entered Luther's room. When Luther, who was sitting at his desk with a mass of books and papers before him, saw the extraordinary stranger enter his room and bolt the door behind him, he asked who he was and what he wanted. The man, who was holding his hat respectfully in his hand, had no sooner, with a diffident presentiment of the terror that he would cause, made answer that he was Michael Kohlhaas, the horse-dealer, than Luther cried out, "Stand far back from me!" and rising from the desk added, as he hurried toward a bell, "Your breath is pestilence, your presence destruction!"

Without stirring from the spot Kohlhaas drew his pistol and said, "Most reverend Sir, if you touch the bell this pistol will stretch me lifeless at your feet! Sit down and hear me. You are not safer among the angels, whose psalms you are writing down, than you are with me."

Luther sat down and asked, "What do you want?" Kohlhaas answered, "I wish to refute the opinion you have of me, that I am an unjust man! You told me in your placard that my sovereign knows nothing about my case. Very well; procure me a safe-conduct and I will go to Dresden and lay it before him."

"Impious and terrible man!" cried Luther, puzzled and, at the same time, reassured by these words. "Who gave you the right to attack Squire Tronka in pursuance of a decree issued on your own authority, and, when you did not find him in his castle, to visit with fire and sword the whole community which protects him?"

Kohlhaas answered, "Reverend Sir, no one, henceforth. Information which I received from Dresden deceived and misled me! The war which I am waging against society is a crime, so long as I haven't been cast out—and you have assured me that I have not."

"Cast out!" cried Luther, looking at him. "What mad thoughts have taken possession of you? Who could have cast you out from the community of the state in which you lived? Indeed where, as long as states have existed, has there ever been a case of any one, no matter who, being cast out of such a community?"

"I call that man cast out," answered Kohlhaas, clenching his fist, "who is denied the protection of the laws. For I need this protection, if my peaceable business is to prosper. Yes, it is for this that, with all my possessions, I take refuge in this community, and he who denies me this protection casts me out among the savages of the desert; he places in my hand — how can you try to deny it? — the club with which to protect myself."

"Who has denied you the protection of the laws?" cried Luther. "Did I not write you that your sovereign, to whom you addressed your complaint, has never heard of it? If state-servants behind his back suppress lawsuits or otherwise trifle with his sacred name without his knowledge, who but God has the right to call him to account for choosing such servants, and are you, lost and terrible man, entitled to judge him therefor?"

"Very well," answered Kohlhaas, "if the sovereign does not cast me out I will return again to the community which he protects. Procure for me, I repeat it, safe-conduct to Dresden; then I will disperse the band of men that I have collected in the castle at Lützen and I will once again lay my complaint, which was rejected, before the courts of the land."

With an expression of vexation, Luther tossed in a heap the papers that were lying on his desk, and was silent. The attitude of defiance which this singular man had assumed toward the state irritated him, and reflecting upon the judgment which Kohlhaas had issued at Kohlhaasenbrück against the Squire, he asked what it was that he demanded of the tribunal at Dresden. Kohlhaas answered, "The punishment of the Squire according to the law; restoration of the horses to their former condition; and compensation for the damages which I, as well as my groom Herse, who fell at Mühlberg, have suffered from the outrage perpetrated upon us."

Luther cried, "Compensation for damages! Money by the thousands, from Jews and Christians, on notes and securities, you have borrowed to defray the expenses of your wild revenge! Shall you put that amount also on the bill when it comes to reckoning up the costs?"

"God forbid!" answered Kohlhaas. "House and farm and the means that I possessed I do not demand back, any more than the expenses of my wife's funeral! Herse's old mother will present the bill for her son's medical treatment, as well as a list of those things which he lost at Tronka Castle; and the loss which I suffered on account of not selling the black horses the government may have estimated by an expert."

Luther exclaimed, as he gazed at him, "Mad, incomprehensible, and amazing man! After your sword has taken the most ferocious revenge upon the Squire which could well be imagined, what impels you to insist upon a judgment against him, the severity of which, when it is finally pronounced, will fall so lightly upon him?"

Kohlhaas answered, while a tear rolled down his cheek, "Most reverend Sir! It has cost me my wife; Kohlhaas intends to prove to the world that she did not perish in an unjust quarrel. Do you, in these particulars, yield to my will and let the court of justice speak; in all other points that may be contested I will yield to you."

Luther said, "See here, what you demand is just, if indeed the circumstances are such as is commonly reported; and if you had only succeeded in having your suit decided by the sovereign before you arbitrarily proceeded to avenge yourself, I do not doubt that your demands would have been granted, point for point. But, all things considered, would it not have been better for you to pardon the Squire for your Redeemer's sake, take back the black horses, thin and worn-out as they were, and mount and ride home to Kohlhaasenbrück to fatten them in your own stable?"

Kohlhaas answered, "Perhaps!" Then, stepping to the window, "Perhaps not, either! Had I known that I should be obliged to set them on their feet again with blood from the heart of my dear wife, I might, reverend Sir, perhaps have done as you say and not have considered a bushel of oats! But since they have now cost me so dear, let the matter run its course, say I; have judgment be pronounced as is due me, and have the Squire fatten my horses for me."

Turning back to his papers with conflicting thoughts, Luther said that he would enter into negotiations with the Elector on his behalf; in the mean time let him remain quietly in the castle at Lützen. If the sovereign would consent to accord him free-conduct, they would make the fact known to him by posting it publicly. "To be sure," he continued, as Kohlhaas bent to kiss his hand, "whether the Elector will be lenient, I do not know, for I have heard that he has collected an army and is about to start out to apprehend you in the castle at Lützen; however, as I have already told you, there shall be no lack of effort on my part" — and, as he spoke, he got up from his chair prepared to dismiss him. Kohlhaas declared that Luther's intercession completely reassured him on that point, whereupon Luther bowed to him with a sweep of his hand. Kohlhaas, however, suddenly sank down on one knee before him and said he had still another favor to ask of him — the fact was, that at Whitsuntide, when it was his custom to receive the Holy Communion, he had failed to go to church on account of this warlike expedition of his. Would Luther have the goodness to receive his confession without further preparation and, in exchange, administer to him the blessed Holy Sacrament? Luther, after reflecting a short time, scanned his face, and said, "Yes, Kohlhaas, I will do so. But the Lord, whose body you desire, forgave his enemy. Will you likewise," he added, as the other looked at him disconcerted, "forgive the Squire who has offended you? Will you go to Tronka Castle, mount your black horses, ride them back to Kohlhaasenbrück and fatten them there?"

"Your Reverence!" said Kohlhaas flushing, and seized his hand —

"Well?"

"Even the Lord did not forgive all his enemies. Let me forgive the Elector, my two gentlemen the castellan and the steward, the lords Hinz and Kunz, and whoever else may have injured me in this affair; but, if it is possible, suffer me to force the Squire to fatten my black horses again for me."

At these words Luther turned his back on him, with a displeased glance, and rang the bell. In answer to the summons an amanuensis came into the anteroom with a light, and Kohlhaas, wiping his eyes, rose from his knees disconcerted; and since the amanuensis was working in vain at the door, which was bolted, and Luther had sat down again to his papers, Kohlhaas opened the door for the man. Luther glanced for an instant over his shoulder at the stranger, and said to the amanuensis, "Light the way!" whereupon the latter, somewhat surprised at the sight of the visitor, took down from the wall the key to the outside door and stepped back to the half-opened door of the room, waiting for the stranger to take his departure. Kohlhaas, holding his hat nervously in both hands, said, "And so, most reverend Sir, I cannot partake of the benefit of reconciliation, which I solicited of you?"

Luther answered shortly, "Reconciliation with your Savior — no! With the sovereign — that depends upon the success of the attempt which I promised you to make." And then he motioned to the amanuensis to carry out, without further delay, the command he had given him. Kohlhaas laid both hands on his heart with an expression of painful emotion, and disappeared after the man who was lighting him down the stairs.

On the next morning Luther dispatched a message to the Elector of Saxony in which, after a bitter allusion to the lords, Hinz and Kunz Tronka, Chamberlain and Cup-bearer to his Highness, who, as was generally known, had suppressed the petition, he informed the sovereign, with the candor that was peculiar to him, that under such notorious circumstances there was nothing to do but to accept the proposition of the horse-dealer and to grant him an amnesty for what had occurred so that he might have opportunity to renew his lawsuit. Public opinion, Luther remarked, was on the side of this man to a very dangerous extent — so much so that, even in Wittenberg, which had three times been burnt down by him, there was a voice raised in his favor. And since, if his offer were refused, Kohlhaas would undoubtedly bring it to the knowledge of the people, accompanied by malicious comments, and the populace might easily be so far misled that nothing further could be done against him by the authorities of the state, Luther concluded that, in this extraordinary case, scruples about entering into negotiations with a subject who had taken up arms must be passed over; that, as a matter of fact, the latter, by the conduct which had been observed toward him, had in a sense been cast out of the body politic, and, in short, in order to put an end to the matter, he should be regarded rather as a foreign power which had attacked the land (and, since he was not a Saxon subject, he really might, in a way, be regarded as such), than as a rebel in revolt against the throne.

When the Elector received this letter there were present at the palace Prince Christiern of Meissen, Generalissimo of the Empire, uncle of that Prince Friedrich of Meissen who had been defeated at Mühlberg and was still laid up with his wounds, also the Grand Chancellor of the Tribunal, Count Wrede, Count Kallheim, President of the Chancery of State, and the two lords, Hinz and Kunz Tronka, the former Cup-bearer, the latter Chamberlain — all confidential friends of the sovereign from his youth. The Chamberlain, Sir Kunz, who in his capacity of privy councilor, attended to the private correspondence of his master and had the right to use his name and seal, was the first to speak. He once more explained in detail that never, on his own authority, would he have suppressed the complaint which the horse-dealer had lodged in court against his cousin the Squire, had it not been for the fact that, misled by false statements, he had believed it an absolutely unfounded and worthless piece of mischief-making. After this he passed on to consider the present state of affairs. He remarked that by neither divine nor human laws had the horse-dealer been warranted in wreaking such horrible vengeance as he had allowed himself to take for this mistake. The Chamberlain then proceeded to describe the glory that would fall upon the damnable head of the latter if they should negotiate with him as with a recognized military power, and the ignominy which would thereby be reflected upon the sacred person of the Elector seemed to him so intolerable that, carried away by the fire of his eloquence, he declared he would rather let worst come to worst, see the judgment of the mad rebel carried out and his cousin, the Squire, led off to Kohlhaasenbrück to fatten the black horses, than know that the proposition made by Dr. Luther had been accepted.

The Lord High Chancellor of the Tribunal of Justice, Count Wrede, turning half way round toward him, expressed regret that the Chamberlain had not, in the first instance, been inspired with such tender solicitude for the reputation of the sovereign as he was displaying in the solution of this undoubtedly delicate affair. He represented to the Elector his hesitation about employing the power of the state to carry out a manifestly unjust measure. He remarked, with a significant allusion to the great numbers which the horse-dealer was continually recruiting in the country, that the thread of the crime threatened in this way to be spun out indefinitely, and declared that the only way to sunder it and extricate the government happily from that ugly quarrel was to act with plain honesty and to make good, directly and without respect of person, the mistake which they had been guilty of committing.

Prince Christiern of Meissen, when asked by the Elector to express his opinion, turned deferentially toward the Grand Chancellor and declared that the latter's way of thinking naturally inspired in him the greatest respect, but, in wishing to aid Kohlhaas to secure justice, the Chancellor failed to consider that he was wronging Wittenberg, Leipzig, and the entire country that had been injured by him, in depriving them of their just claim for indemnity or at least for punishment of the culprit. The order of the state was so disturbed in its relation to this man that it would be difficult to set it right by an axiom taken from the science of law. Therefore, in accord with the opinion of the Chamberlain, he was in favor of employing the means appointed for such cases — that is to say, there should be gathered a force large enough to enable them either to capture or to crush the horse-dealer, who had planted himself in the castle at Lützen. The Chamberlain brought over two chairs from the wall and obligingly placed them together in the middle of the room for the Elector and the Prince, saying, as he did so, that he was delighted to find that a man of the latter's uprightness and acumen agreed with him about the means to be employed in settling an affair of such varied aspect. The Prince, placing his hand on the chair without sitting down, looked at him, and assured him that he had little cause to rejoice on that account since the first step connected with this course would be the issuing of a warrant for his arrest, to be followed by a suit for misuse of the sovereign's name. For if necessity required that the veil be drawn before the throne of justice over a series of crimes, which finally would be unable to find room before the bar of judgment, since each led to another, and no end — this at least did not apply to the original offense which had given birth to them. First and foremost, he, the Chamberlain, must be tried for his life if the state was to be authorized to crush the horse-dealer, whose case, as was well known, was exceedingly just, and in whose hand they had placed the sword that he was wielding.

The discomfited Chamberlain at these words gazed at the Elector, who turned away, his whole face flushing, and walked over to the window. After an embarrassing silence on all sides, Count Kallheim said that this was not the way to extricate themselves from the magic circle in which they were captive. His nephew, Prince Friedrich, might be put upon trial with equal justice, for in the peculiar expedition which he had undertaken against Kohlhaas he had overstepped his instructions in many ways — so much so that, if one were to inquire about the whole long list of those who had caused the embarrassment in which they now found themselves, he too would have to be named among them and called to account by the sovereign for what had occurred at Mühlberg.

While the Elector, with doubtful glances, walked up to his table, the Cup-bearer, Sir Hinz Tronka, began to speak in his turn. He did not understand, he said, how the governmental decree which was to be passed could escape men of such wisdom as were here assembled. The horse-dealer, so far as he knew, in return for mere safe-conduct to Dresden and a renewed investigation of his case, had promised to disband the force with which he had attacked the land. It did not follow from this, however, that he must be granted an amnesty for the wanton revenge he had taken into his own hands. These were two different legal concepts which Dr. Luther, as well as the council of state, seemed to have confounded. "When," he continued, laying his finger beside his nose, "the judgment concerning the black horses has been pronounced by the Tribunal at Dresden, no matter what it may be, nothing prevents us from imprisoning Kohlhaas on the ground of his incendiarism and robberies. That would be a diplomatic solution of the affair, which would unite the advantages of the opinion of both statesmen and would be sure to win the applause of the world and of posterity." The Prince, as well as the Lord Chancellor, answered this speech of Sir Hinz with a mere glance, and, as the discussion accordingly seemed at an end, the Elector said that he would turn over in his own mind, until the next sitting of the State Council, the various opinions which had been expressed before him. It seemed as if the preliminary measure mentioned by the

Prince had deprived the Elector's heart, which was very sensitive where friendship was concerned, of the desire to proceed with the campaign against Kohlhaas, all the preparations for which were completed; at least he bade the Lord Chancellor, Count Wrede, whose opinion appeared to him the most expedient, to remain after the others left. The latter showed him letters from which it appeared that, as a matter of fact, the horse-dealer's forces had already come to number four hundred men; indeed, in view of the general discontent which prevailed all over the country on account of the misdemeanors of the Chamberlain, he might reckon on doubling or even tripling this number in a short time. Without further hesitation the Elector decided to accept the advice given him by Dr. Luther; accordingly he handed over to Count Wrede the entire management of the Kohlhaas affair. Only a few days later a placard appeared, the essence of which we give as follows:

"We, etc., etc., Elector of Saxony, in especially gracious consideration of the intercession made to us by Doctor Martin Luther, do grant to Michael Kohlhaas, horse-dealer from the territory of Brandenburg, safe-conduct to Dresden for the purpose of a renewed investigation of his case, on condition that, within three days after sight, he lay down the arms to which he has had recourse. It is to be understood, however, that in the unlikely event of Kohlhaas' suit concerning the black horses being rejected by the Tribunal at Dresden, he shall be prosecuted with all the severity of the law for arbitrarily undertaking to procure justice for himself. Should his suit, however, terminate otherwise, we will show mercy to him and his whole band, instead of inflicting deserved punishment, and a complete amnesty shall be accorded him for the acts of violence which he has committed in Saxony."

Kohlhaas had no sooner received through Dr. Luther a copy of this placard, which had been posted in all the public squares throughout the land, than, in spite of the conditional language in which it was couched, he immediately dispersed his whole band of followers with presents, expressions of gratitude, and appropriate admonitions. He deposited whatever he had taken in the way of money, weapons, and chattels, with the courts at Lützen, to be held as the property of the Elector, and after he had dispatched Waldmann to the bailiff at Kohlhaasenbrück with letters about repurchasing his farm, if that were still possible, and had sent Sternbald to Schwerin for his children whom he wished to have with him again, he left the castle at Lützen and went, without being recognized, to Dresden, carrying with him in bonds the remnant of his little property.

Day was just breaking and the whole city was still asleep when he knocked at the door of the little dwelling situated in the suburb of Pirna, which still, thanks to the honesty of the bailiff, belonged to him. Thomas, the old porter, in charge of the establishment, who on opening the door was surprised and startled to see his master, was told to take word to the Prince of Meissen, in the Government Office, that Kohlhaas the horse-dealer had arrived. The Prince of Meissen, on hearing this news, deemed it expedient to inform himself immediately of the relation in which they stood to this man. When, shortly afterward, he appeared with a retinue of knights and servants, he found an immense crowd of people already gathered in the streets leading to Kohlhaas' dwelling. The news that the destroying angel was there, who punished the oppressors of the people with fire and sword, had aroused all Dresden, the city as well as the suburbs. They were obliged to bolt the door of the house against the press of curious people, and the boys climbed up to the windows in order to get a peep at the incendiary, who was eating his breakfast inside.

As soon as the Prince, with the help of the guard who cleared the way for him, had pushed into the house and entered Kohlhaas' room, he asked the latter, who was standing half undressed before a table, whether he was Kohlhaas, the horse-dealer. Kohlhaas, drawing from his belt a wallet containing several papers concerning his affairs and handing it respectfully to the Prince, answered, "Yes;" and added that, in conformity with the immunity granted him by the sovereign, he had come to Dresden, after disbanding his force, in order to institute proceedings against Squire Wenzel Tronka on account of the black horses.

The Prince, after a hasty glance which took Kohlhaas in from head to foot, looked through the papers in the wallet and had him explain the nature of a certificate which he found there executed by the court at Lützen, concerning the deposit made in favor of the treasury of the Electorate. After he had further tested him with various questions about his children, his wealth, and the sort of life he intended to lead in the future, in order to find out what kind of man he was, and had concluded that in every respect they might set their minds at rest about him, he gave him back the documents and said that nothing now stood in the way of his lawsuit, and that, in order to institute it, he should just apply directly to the Lord High Chancellor of the Tribunal, Count Wrede himself. "In the meantime," said the Prince after a pause, crossing over to the window and gazing in amazement at the people gathered in front of the house, "you will be obliged to consent to a guard for the first few days, to protect you in your house as well as when you go out!" Kohlhaas looked down disconcerted, and was silent. "Well, no matter," said the Prince, leaving the window; "whatever happens, you have yourself to blame for it;" and with that he turned again toward the door with the intention of leaving the house. Kohlhaas, who had reflected, said "My lord, do as you like! If you will give me your word that the guard will be withdrawn as soon as I wish it, I have no objection to this measure." The Prince answered, "That is understood, of course." He informed the three foot-soldiers, who were appointed for this purpose, that the man in whose house they were to remain was free, and that it was merely for his protection that they were to follow him when he went out; he then saluted the horse-dealer with a condescending wave of the hand, and took his leave.

Toward midday Kohlhaas went to Count Wrede, Lord High Chancellor of the Tribunal; he was escorted by his three foot-soldiers and followed by an innumerable crowd, who, having been warned by the police, did not try to harm him in any way. The Chancellor received him in his antechamber with benignity and kindness, conversed with him for two whole hours, and after he had had the entire course of the affair related to him from beginning to end, referred Kohlhaas to a celebrated lawyer in the city who was a member of the Tribunal, so that he might have the complaint drawn up and presented immediately.

Kohlhaas, without further delay, betook himself to the lawyer's house and had the suit drawn up exactly like the original one which had been quashed. He demanded the punishment of the Squire according to law, the restoration of the horses to their former condition, and compensation for the damages he had sustained as well as for those suffered by his groom, Herse, who had fallen at Mühlberg—in behalf of the latter's old mother. When this was done Kohlhaas returned home, accompanied by the crowd that still continued to gape at him, firmly resolved in his mind not to leave the house again unless called away by important business.

In the mean time the Squire had been released from his imprisonment in Wittenberg, and after recovering from a dangerous attack of erysipelas which had caused inflammation of his foot, had been summoned by the Supreme Court in peremptory terms to present himself in Dresden to answer the suit instituted against him by the horse-dealer, Kohlhaas, with regard to a pair of black horses which had been unlawfully taken from him and worked to death. The Tronka brothers, the Chamberlain and the Cupbearer, cousins of the Squire, at whose house he alighted, received him with the greatest bitterness and contempt. They called him a miserable good-for-nothing, who had brought shame and disgrace on the whole family, told him that he would inevitably lose his suit, and called upon him to prepare at once to produce the black horses, which he would be condemned to fatten to the scornful laughter of the world. The Squire answered in a weak and trembling voice that he was more deserving of pity than any other man on earth. He swore that he had known but little about the whole cursed affair which had plunged him into misfortune, and that the castellan and the steward were to blame for everything, because they, without his knowledge or consent, had used the horses in getting in the crops and, by overworking them, partly in their own fields, had rendered them unfit for further use. He sat down as he said this and begged them not to mortify and insult him and thus wantonly cause a relapse of the illness from which he had but recently recovered.

Since there was nothing else to be done, the next day, at the request of their cousin, the Squire, the lords Hinz and Kunz, who possessed estates in the neighborhood of Tronka Castle, which had been burned down, wrote to their stewards and to the farmers living there for information about the black horses which had been lost on that unfortunate day and not heard of since. But on account of the complete destruction of the castle and the massacre of most of the inhabitants, all that they could learn was that a servant, driven by blows dealt with the flat of the incendiary's sword, had rescued them from the burning shed in which they were standing, but that afterward, to the question where he should take them and what he should do with them, he had been answered by a kick from the savage madman. The Squire's gouty old housekeeper, who had fled to Meissen, assured the latter, in reply to his written inquiry, that on the morning after that horrible night the servant had gone off with the horses toward the Brandenburg border, but all inquiries which were made there proved vain, and some error seemed to lie at the bottom of this information, as the Squire had no servant whose home was in Brandenburg or even on the road thither. Some men from Dresden, who had been in Wilsdruf a few days after the burning of Tronka Castle, declared that, at the time named, a groom had arrived in that place, leading two horses by the halter, and, as the animals were very sick and could go no further, he had left them in the cow-stable of a shepherd who had offered to restore them to good condition. For a variety of reasons it seemed very probable that these were the black horses for which search was being made, but persons coming from Wilsdruf declared that the shepherd had already traded them off again, no one knew to whom; and a third rumor, the originator of which could not be discovered, even asserted that the two horses had in the mean time passed peacefully away and been buried in the carrion pit at Wilsdruf.

This turn of affairs, as can be easily understood, was the most pleasing to the lords Hinz and Kunz, as they were thus relieved of the necessity of fattening the blacks in their stables, the Squire, their cousin, no longer having any stables of his own. They wished, however, for the sake of absolute security, to verify this circumstance. Sir Wenzel Tronka, therefore, in his capacity as hereditary feudal lord with the right of judicature, addressed a letter to the magistrates at Wilsdruf, in which, after a minute description of the black horses, which, as he said, had been intrusted to his care and lost through an accident, he begged them to be so obliging as to ascertain their present whereabouts, and to urge and admonish the owner, whoever he might be, to deliver them at the stables of the Chamberlain, Sir Kunz, in Dresden, and be generously reimbursed for all costs. Accordingly, a few days later, the man to whom the shepherd in Wilsdruf had sold them did actually appear with the horses, thin and staggering, tied to the tailboard of his cart, and led them to the market-place in Dresden. As the bad luck of Sir Wenzel and still more of honest Kohlhaas would have it, however, the man happened to be the knacker from Döbeln.

As soon as Sir Wenzel, in the presence of the Chamberlain, his cousin, learned from an indefinite rumor that a man had arrived in the city with two black horses which had escaped from the burning of Tronka Castle, both gentlemen, accompanied by a few servants hurriedly collected in the house, went to the palace square where the man had stopped, intending, if the two animals proved to be those belonging to Kohlhaas, to make good the expenses the man had incurred and take the horses home with them. But how disconcerted were the knights to see a momentarily increasing crowd of people, who had been attracted by the spectacle, already standing around the two-wheeled cart to which the horses were fastened! Amid uninterrupted laughter they were calling to one another that the horses, on account of which the whole state was tottering, already belonged to the knacker! The Squire who had gone around the cart and gazed at the miserable animals, which seemed every moment about to expire, said in an embarrassed way that those were not the horses which he had taken from Kohlhaas; but Sir Kunz, the Chamberlain, casting at him a look of speechless rage which, had it been of iron, would have dashed him to pieces, and throwing back his cloak to disclose his orders and chain, stepped up to the knacker and asked if those were the black horses which the shepherd at Wilsdruf had gained possession of, and for which Squire Wenzel Tronka, to whom they belonged, had made requisition through the magistrate of that place.

The knacker who, with a pail of water in his hand, was busy watering a fat, sturdy horse that was drawing his cart asked —" The blacks? " Then he put down the pail, took the bit out of the horse's mouth, and explained that the black horses which were tied to the tailboard of the cart had been sold to him by the swineherd in Hainichen; where the latter had obtained them and whether they came from the shepherd at Wilsdruf — that he did not know. " He had been told," he continued, taking up the pail again and propping it between the pole of the cart and his knee —

"he had been told by the messenger of the court at Wilsdruf to take the horses to the house of the Tronkas in Dresden, but the Squire to whom he had been directed was named Kunz." With these words he turned around with the rest of the water which the horse had left in the pail, and emptied it out on the pavement. The Chamberlain, who was beset by the stares of the laughing, jeering crowd and could not induce the fellow, who was attending to his business with phlegmatic zeal, to look at him, said that he was the Chamberlain Kunz Tronka. The black horses, however, which he was to get possession of, had to be those belonging to the Squire, his cousin; they must have been given to the shepherd at Wilsdruf by a stable-man who had run away from Tronka Castle at the time of the fire; moreover, they must be the two horses that originally had belonged to the horse-dealer Kohlhaas. He asked the fellow, who was standing there with his legs apart, pulling up his trousers, whether he did not know something about all this. Had not the swineherd of Hainichen, he went on, perhaps purchased these horses from the shepherd at Wilsdruf, or from a third person, who in turn had bought them from the latter?—for everything depended on this circumstance.

The knacker replied that he had been ordered to go with the black horses to Dresden and was to receive the money for them in the house of the Tronkas. He did not understand what the Squire was talking about, and whether it was Peter or Paul, or the shepherd in Wilsdruf, who had owned them before the swineherd in Hainichen, was all one to him so long as they had not been stolen; and with this he went off, with his whip across his broad back, to a public house which stood in the square, with the intention of getting some breakfast, as he was very hungry.

The Chamberlain, who for the life of him didn't know what he should do with the horses which the swineherd of Hainichen had sold to the knacker of Döbeln, unless they were those on which the devil was riding through Saxony, asked the Squire to say something; but when the latter with white, trembling lips replied that it would be advisable to buy the black horses whether they belonged to Kohlhaas or not, the Chamberlain, cursing the father and mother who had given birth to the Squire, stepped aside out of the crowd and threw back his cloak, absolutely at a loss to know what he should do or leave undone. Defiantly determined not to leave the square just because the rabble were staring at him derisively and with their handkerchiefs pressed tight over their mouths seemed to be waiting only for him to depart before bursting out into laughter, he called to Baron Wenk, an acquaintance who happened to be riding by, and begged him to stop at the house of the Lord High Chancellor, Count Wrede, and through the latter's instrumentality to have Kohlhaas brought there to look at the black horses.

When the Baron, intent upon this errand, entered the chamber of the Lord High Chancellor, it so happened that Kohlhaas was just then present, having been summoned by a messenger of the court to give certain explanations of which they stood in need concerning the deposit in Lützen. While the Chancellor, with an annoyed look, rose from his chair and asked the horse-dealer, whose person was unknown to the Baron, to step to one side with his papers, the latter informed him of the dilemma in which the lords Tronka found themselves. He explained that the knacker from Döbeln, acting on a defective requisition from the court at Wilsdruf, had appeared with horses whose condition was so frightful that Squire Wenzel could not help hesitating to pronounce them the ones belonging to Kohlhaas. In case they were to be taken from the knacker notwithstanding, and an attempt made to restore them to good condition in the stables of the knights, an ocular inspection by Kohlhaas would first be necessary in order to establish the aforesaid circumstance beyond doubt. "Will you therefore have the goodness," he concluded, "to have a guard fetch the horse-dealer from his house and conduct him to the market-place where the horses are standing?" The Lord High Chancellor, taking his glasses from his nose, said that the Baron was laboring under a double delusion — first, in thinking that the fact in question could be ascertained only by means of an ocular inspection by Kohlhaas, and then, in imagining that he, the Chancellor, possessed the authority to have Kohlhaas taken by a guard wherever the Squire happened to wish. With this he presented to him Kohlhaas who was standing behind him, and sitting down and putting on his glasses again, begged him to apply to the horse-dealer himself in the matter.

Kohlhaas, whose expression gave no hint of what was going on in his mind, said that he was ready to follow the Baron to the market-place and inspect the black horses which the knacker had brought to the city. As the disconcerted Baron faced around toward him, Kohlhaas stepped up to the table of the Chancellor, and, after taking time to explain to him, with the help of the papers in his wallet, several matters concerning the deposit in Lützen, took his leave. The Baron, who had walked over to the window, his face suffused with a deep blush, likewise made his adieux, and both, escorted by the three foot-soldiers assigned by the Prince of Meissen, took their way to the Palace square attended by a great crowd of people.

In the mean time the Chamberlain, Sir Kunz, in spite of the protests of several friends who had joined him, had stood his ground among the people, opposite the knacker of Döbeln. As soon as the Baron and the horse-dealer appeared he went up to the latter and, holding his sword proudly and ostentatiously under his arm, asked if the horses standing behind the wagon were his.

The horse-dealer, turning modestly toward the gentleman who had asked him the question and who was unknown to him, touched his hat; then, without answering, he walked toward the knacker's cart, surrounded by all the knights. The animals were standing there on unsteady legs, with heads bowed down to the ground, making no attempt to eat the hay which the knacker had placed before them. Kohlhaas stopped a dozen feet away, and after a hasty glance turned back again to the Chamberlain, saying, " My lord, the knacker is quite right; the horses which are fastened to his cart belong to me! " As he spoke he looked around at the whole circle of knights, touched his hat once more, and left the square, accompanied by his guard.

At these words the Chamberlain, with a hasty step that made the plume of his helmet tremble, strode up to the knacker and threw him a purse full of money. And while the latter, holding the purse in his hand, combed the hair back from his forehead with a leaden comb and stared at the money, Sir Kunz ordered a groom to untie the horses and lead them home. The groom, at the summons of his master, left a group of his friends and relatives among the crowd; his face flushed slightly, but he did, nevertheless, go up to the horses, stepping over a big puddle that had formed at their feet. No sooner, however, had he taken hold of the halter to untie them, than Master Himboldt, his cousin, seized him by the arm, and with the words, " You shan't touch the knacker's jades! " hurled him away from the cart. Then, stepping back unsteadily over the puddle, the Master turned toward the Chamberlain, who was standing there, speechless with astonishment at this incident, and added that he must get a knacker's man to do him such a service as that. The Chamberlain, foaming with rage, stared at Master Himboldt for a moment, then turned about and, over the heads of the knights who surrounded him, called for the guard. When, in obedience to the orders of Baron Wenk, an officer with some of the Elector's bodyguards had arrived from the palace, Sir Kunz gave him a short account of the shameful way in which the burghers of the city permitted themselves to instigate revolt, and called upon the officer to place the ringleader, Master Himboldt, under arrest. Seizing the Master by the chest, the Chamberlain accused him of having maltreated and thrust away from the cart the groom who, at his orders, was unhitching the black horses. The Master, freeing himself from the Chamberlain's grasp with a skilful twist which forced the latter to step back, cried, "My lord, showing a boy of twenty what he ought to do is not instigating him to revolt! Ask him whether, contrary to all that is customary and decent, he cares to have anything to do with those horses that are tied to the cart. If he wants to do it after what I have said, well and good. For all I care, he may flay and skin them now."

At these words the Chamberlain turned round to the groom and asked him if he had any scruples about fulfilling his command to untie the horses which belonged to Kohlhaas and lead them home. When the groom, stepping back among the citizens, answered timidly that the horses must be made honorable once more before that could be expected of him, the Chamberlain followed him, tore from the young man's head the hat which was decorated with the badge of his house, and, after trampling it under his feet, drew his sword and with furious blows drove the groom instantly from the square and from his service. Master Himboldt cried, "Down with the bloodthirsty madman, friends!" And while the citizens, outraged at this scene, crowded together and forced back the guard, he came up behind the Chamberlain and threw him down, tore off his cloak, collar, and helmet, wrenched the sword from his hand, and dashed it with a furious fling far away across the square.

In vain did the Squire Wenzel, as he worked his way out of the crowd, call to the knights to go to his cousin's aid; even before they had started to rescue him, they had been so scattered by the rush of the mob that the Chamberlain, who in falling had injured his head, was exposed to the full wrath of the crowd. The only thing that saved him was the appearance of a troop of mounted soldiers who chanced to be crossing the square, and whom the officer of the Elector's body-guards called to his assistance. The officer, after dispersing the crowd, seized the furious Master Himboldt, and, while some of the troopers bore him off to prison, two friends picked up the unfortunate Chamberlain, who was covered with blood, and carried him home.

Such was the unfortunate outcome of the well-meant and honest attempt to procure the horse-dealer satisfaction for the injustice that had been committed against him. The knacker of Döbeln, whose business was concluded, and who did not wish to delay any longer, tied the horses to a lamp-post, since the crowd was beginning to scatter, and there they remained the whole day through without any one's bothering about them, an object of mockery for the street-arabs and loafers. Finally, since they lacked any sort of care and attention, the police were obliged to take them in hand, and, toward evening, the knacker of Dresden was called to carry them off to the knacker's house outside the city to await further instructions.

This incident, as little as the horse-dealer was in reality to blame for it, nevertheless awakened throughout the country, even among the more moderate and better class of people, a sentiment extremely dangerous to the success of his lawsuit. The relation of this man to the state was felt to be quite intolerable and, in private houses as well as in public places, the opinion gained ground that it would be better to commit an open injustice against him and quash the whole lawsuit anew, rather than, for the mere sake of satisfying his mad obstinacy, to accord him in so trivial a matter justice which he had wrung from them by deeds of violence.

To complete the ruin of poor Kohlhaas, it was the Lord High Chancellor himself, animated by too great probity, and a consequent hatred of the Tronka family, who helped strengthen and spread this sentiment. It was highly improbable that the horses, which were now being cared for by the knacker of Dresden, would ever be restored to the condition they were in when they left the stables at Kohlhaasenbrück. However, granted that this might be possible by skilful and constant care, nevertheless the disgrace which, as a result of the existing circumstances, had fallen upon the Squire's family was so great that, in consideration of the political importance which the house possessed — being, as it was, one of the oldest and noblest families in the land — nothing seemed more just and expedient than to arrange a money indemnity for the horses. In spite of this, a few days later, when the President, Count Kallheim, in the name of the Chamberlain, who was deterred by his sickness, sent a letter to the Chancellor containing this proposition, the latter did indeed send a communication to Kohlhaas in which he admonished him not to decline such a proposition should it be made to him; but in a short and rather curt answer to the President himself the Chancellor begged him not to bother him with private commissions in this matter and advised the Chamberlain to apply to the horse-dealer himself, whom he described as a very just and modest man. The horse-dealer, whose will was, in fact, broken by the incident which had occurred in the market-place, was, in conformity with the advice of the Lord Chancellor, only waiting for an overture on the part of the Squire or his relatives in order to meet them half-way with perfect willingness and forgiveness for all that had happened; but to make this overture entailed too great a sacrifice of dignity on the part of the proud knights. Very much incensed by the answer they had received from the Lord Chancellor, they showed the same to the Elector, who on the morning of the following day had visited the Chamberlain in his room where he was confined to his bed with his wounds.

In a voice rendered weak and pathetic by his condition, the Chamberlain asked the Elector whether, after risking his life to settle this affair according to his sovereign's wishes, he must also expose his honor to the censure of the world and to appear with a request for relenting and compromise before a man who had brought every imaginable shame and disgrace on him and his family.

The Elector, after having read the letter, asked Count Kallheim in an embarrassed way whether, without further communication with Kohlhaas, the Tribunal were not authorized to base its decision on the fact that the horses could not be restored to their original condition, and in conformity therewith to draw up the judgment just as if the horses were dead, on the sole basis of a money indemnity.

The Count answered, " Most gracious sovereign, they are dead; they are dead in the sight of the law because they have no value, and they will be so physically before they can be brought from the knacker's house to the knights' stables." To this the Elector, putting the letter in his pocket, replied that he would himself speak to the Lord Chancellor about it. He spoke soothingly to the Chamberlain, who raised himself on his elbow and seized his hand in gratitude, and, after lingering a moment to urge him to take care of his health, rose with a very gracious air and left the room.

Thus stood affairs in Dresden, when from the direction of Lützen there gathered over poor Kohlhaas another thunder-storm, even more serious, whose lightning-flash the crafty knights were clever enough to draw down upon the horse-dealer's unlucky head. It so happened that one of the band of men that Kohlhaas had collected and turned off again after the appearance of the electoral amnesty, Johannes Nagelschmidt by name, had found it expedient, some weeks later, to muster again on the Bohemian frontier a part of this rabble which was ready to take part in any infamy, and to continue on his own account the profession on the track of which Kohlhaas had put him. This good-for-nothing fellow called himself a vicegerent of Kohlhaas, partly to inspire with fear the officers of the law who were after him, and partly, by the use of familiar methods, to beguile the country people into participating in his rascalities. With a cleverness which he had learned from his master, he had it noised abroad that the amnesty had not been kept in the case of several men who had quietly returned to their homes — indeed that Kohlhaas himself had, with a faithlessness which cried aloud to heaven, been arrested on his arrival in Dresden and placed under a guard. He carried it so far that, in manifestos which were very similar to those of Kohlhaas, his incendiary band appeared as an army raised solely for the glory of God and meant to watch over the observance of the amnesty promised by the Elector. All this, as we have already said, was done by no means for the glory of God nor out of attachment for Kohlhaas, whose fate was a matter of absolute indifference to the outlaws, but in order to enable them, under cover of such dissimulation, to burn and plunder with the greater ease and impunity.

When the first news of this reached Dresden the knights could not conceal their joy over the occurrence, which lent an entirely different aspect to the whole matter. With wise and displeased allusions they recalled the mistake which had been made when, in spite of their urgent and repeated warnings, an amnesty had been granted Kohlhaas, as if those who had been in favor of it had had the deliberate intention of giving to miscreants of all kinds the signal to follow in his footsteps. Not content with crediting Nagelschmidt's pretext that he had taken up arms merely to lend support and security to his oppressed master, they even expressed the decided opinion that his whole course was nothing but an enterprise contrived by Kohlhaas in order to frighten the government, and to hasten and insure the rendering of a verdict, which, point for point, should satisfy his mad obstinacy. Indeed the Cup-bearer, Sir Hinz, went so far as to declare to some hunting-pages and courtiers who had gathered round him after dinner in the Elector's antechamber that the breaking up of the marauding band in Lützen had been but a cursed pretense. He was very merry over the Lord High Chancellor's alleged love of justice; by cleverly connecting various circumstances he proved that the band was still extant in the forests of the Electorate and was only waiting for a signal from the horse-dealer to break out anew with fire and sword.

Prince Christiern of Meissen, very much displeased at this turn in affairs, which threatened to fleck his sovereign's honor in the most painful manner, went immediately to the palace to confer with the Elector. He saw quite clearly that it would be to the interest of the knights to ruin Kohlhaas, if possible, on the ground of new crimes, and he begged the Elector to give him permission to have an immediate judicial examination of the horse-dealer. Kohlhaas, somewhat astonished at being conducted to the Government Office by a constable, appeared with his two little boys, Henry and Leopold, in his arms; for Sternbald, his servant, had arrived the day before with his five children from Mecklenburg, where they had been staying. When Kohlhaas had started to leave for the Government Office the two boys had burst into childish tears, begging him to take them along, and various considerations too intricate to unravel made him decide to pick them up and carry them with him to the hearing. Kohlhaas placed the children beside him, and the Prince, after looking benevolently at them and asking, with friendly interest, their names and ages, went on to inform Kohlhaas what liberties Nagelschmidt, his former follower, was taking in the valleys of the Ore Mountains, and handing him the latter's so-called mandates he told him to produce whatever he had to offer for his vindication. Although the horse-dealer was deeply alarmed by these shameful and traitorous papers, he nevertheless had little difficulty in explaining satisfactorily to so upright a man as the Prince the groundlessness of the accusations brought against him on this score. Besides the fact that, so far as he could observe, he did not, as the matter now stood, need any help as yet from a third person in bringing about the decision of his lawsuit, which was proceeding most favorably, some papers which he had with him and showed to the Prince made it appear highly improbable that Nagelschmidt should be inclined to render him help of that sort, for, shortly before the dispersion of the band in Lützen, he had been on the point of having the fellow hanged for a rape committed in the open country, and other rascalities. Only the appearance of the electoral amnesty had saved Nagelschmidt, as it had severed all relations between them, and on the next day they had parted as mortal enemies.

Kohlhaas, with the Prince's approval of the idea, sat down and wrote a letter to Nagelschmidt in which he declared that the latter's pretense of having taken the field in order to maintain the amnesty which had been violated with regard to him and his band, was a disgraceful and vicious fabrication. He told him that, on his arrival in Dresden, he had neither been imprisoned nor handed over to a guard, also that his lawsuit was progressing exactly as he wished, and, as a warning for the rabble who had gathered around Nagelschmidt, he gave him over to the full vengeance of the law for the outrages which he had committed in the Ore Mountains after the publication of the amnesty. Some portions of the criminal prosecution which the horse-dealer had instituted against him in the castle at Lützen on account of the above-mentioned disgraceful acts, were also appended to the letter to enlighten the people concerning the good-for-nothing fellow, who even at that time had been destined for the gallows, and, as already stated, had only been saved by the edict issued by the Elector. In consequence of this letter the Prince appeased Kohlhaas' displeasure at the suspicion which, of necessity, they had been obliged to express in this hearing; he went on to declare that, while he remained in Dresden, the amnesty granted him should not be violated in any way; then, after presenting to the boys some fruit that was on his table, he shook hands with them once more, saluted Kohlhaas, and dismissed him.

The Lord High Chancellor, who nevertheless recognized the danger that was threatening the horse-dealer, did his utmost to bring his lawsuit to an end before it should be complicated and confused by new developments; this, however, was exactly what the diplomatic knights desired and aimed at. Instead of silently acknowledging their guilt, as at first, and obtaining merely a less severe sentence, they now began with pettifogging and crafty subterfuges to deny this guilt itself entirely. Sometimes they pretended that the black horses belonging to Kohlhaas had been detained at Tronka Castle on the arbitrary authority of the castellan and the steward, and that the Squire had known little, if anything, of their actions. At other times they declared that, even on their arrival at the castle, the animals had been suffering from a violent and dangerous cough, and, in confirmation of the fact, they referred to witnesses whom they pledged themselves to produce. Forced to withdraw these arguments after many long-drawn-out investigations and explanations, they even cited an electoral edict of twelve years before, in which the importation of horses from Brandenburg into Saxony had actually been forbidden, on account of a plague among the cattle. This circumstance, according to them, made it as clear as day that the Squire not only had the authority, but also was under obligation, to hold up the horses that Kohlhaas had brought across the border. Kohlhaas, meanwhile, had bought back his farm at Kohlhaasenbrück from the honest bailiff, in return for a small compensation for the loss sustained. He wished, apparently in connection with the legal settlement of this business, to leave Dresden for some days and return to his home, in which determination, however, the above-mentioned matter of business, imperative as it may actually have been on account of sowing the winter crops, undoubtedly played less part than the intention of testing his position under such unusual and critical circumstances. He may perhaps also have been influenced by reasons of still another kind which we will leave to every one who is acquainted with his own heart to divine.

In pursuance of this resolve he betook himself to the Lord Chancellor, leaving behind the guard which had been assigned to him. He carried with him the letters from the bailiff, and explained that if, as seemed to be the case, he were not urgently needed in court, he would like to leave the city and go to Brandenburg for a week or ten days, within which time he promised to be back again. The Lord High Chancellor, looking down with a displeased and dubious expression, replied that he must acknowledge that Kohlhaas' presence was more necessary just then than ever, as the court, on account of the prevaricating and tricky tactics of the opposition, required his statements and explanations at a thousand points that could not be foreseen. However, when Kohlhaas referred him to his lawyer, who was well informed concerning the lawsuit, and with modest importunity persisted in his request, promising to confine his absence to a week, the Lord Chancellor, after a pause, said briefly, as he dismissed him, that he hoped that Kohlhaas would apply to Prince Christiern of Meissen for passports.

Kohlhaas, who could read the Lord Chancellor's face perfectly, was only strengthened in his determination. He sat down immediately and, without giving any reason, asked the Prince of Meissen, as head of the Government Office, to furnish him passports for a week's journey to Kohlhaasenbrück and back. In reply to this letter he received a cabinet order signed by the Governor of the Palace, Baron Siegfried Wenk, to the effect that his request for passports to Kohlhaasenbrück would be laid before his serene highness the Elector, and as soon as his gracious consent had been received the passports would be sent to him. When Kohlhaas inquired of his lawyer how the cabinet order came to be signed by a certain Baron, Siegfried Wenk, and not by Prince Christiern of Meissen to whom he had applied, he was told that the Prince had set out for his estates three days before, and during his absence the affairs of the Government Office had been put in the hands of the Governor of the Palace, Baron Siegfried Wenk, a cousin of the gentleman of the same name who has been already mentioned.

Kohlhaas, whose heart was beginning to beat uneasily amid all these complications, waited several days for the decision concerning his petition which had been laid before the person of the sovereign with such a surprising amount of formality. A week passed, however, and more than a week, without the arrival of this decision; nor had judgment been pronounced by the Tribunal, although it had been definitely promised him. Finally, on the twelfth day, Kohlhaas, firmly resolved to force the government to proclaim its intentions toward him, let them be what they would, sat down and, in an urgent request, once more asked the Government Office for the desired passports. On the evening of the following day, which had likewise passed without the expected answer, he was walking up and down, thoughtfully considering his position and especially the amnesty procured for him by Dr. Luther, when, on approaching the window of his little back room, he was astonished not to see the soldiers in the little out-building on the courtyard which he had designated as quarters for the guard assigned him by the Prince of Meissen at the time of his arrival. He called Thomas, the old porter, to him and asked what it meant. The latter answered with a sigh, "Sir, something is wrong! The soldiers, of whom there are more today than usual, distributed themselves around the whole house when it began to grow dark; two with shield and spear are standing in the street before the front door, two are at the back door in the garden, and two others are lying on a truss of straw in the vestibule and say that they are going to sleep there."

Kohlhaas grew pale and turned away, adding that it really did not matter, provided they were still there, and that when Thomas went down into the corridor he should place a light so that the soldiers could see. Then he opened the shutter of the front window under the pretext of emptying a vessel, and convinced himself of the truth of the circumstance of which the old man had informed him, for just at that moment the guard was actually being changed without a sound, a precaution which had never before entered any one's head as long as the arrangement had existed. After which, Kohlhaas, having made up his mind immediately what he would do on the morrow, went to bed, though, to be sure, he felt little desire to sleep. For nothing in the course of the government with which he was dealing displeased him more than this outward form of justice, while in reality it was violating in his case the amnesty promised him, and in case he were to be considered really a prisoner — as could no longer be doubted — he intended to wring from the government the definite and straightforward statement that such was the case.

In accordance with this plan, at earliest dawn he had Sternbald, his groom, harness his wagon and drive up to the door, intending, as he explained, to drive to Lockwitz to see the steward, an old acquaintance of his, who had met him a few days before in Dresden and had invited him and his children to visit him some time. The soldiers, who, putting their heads together, had watched the stir which these preparations were causing in the household, secretly sent off one of their number to the city and, a few minutes later, a government clerk appeared at the head of several constables and went into the house opposite, pretending to have some business there. Kohlhaas, who was occupied in dressing his boys, likewise noticed the commotion and intentionally kept the wagon waiting in front of the house longer than was really necessary. As soon as he saw that the arrangements of the police were completed, without paying any attention to them he came out before the house with his children. He said, in passing, to the group of soldiers standing in the doorway that they did not need to follow him; then he lifted the boys into the wagon and kissed and comforted the weeping little girls who, in obedience to his orders, were to remain behind with the daughter of the old porter. He had no sooner climbed up on the wagon himself than the government clerk, with the constables who accompanied him, stepped up from the opposite house and asked where he was going. To the answer of Kohlhaas that he was going to Lockwitz to see his friend, the steward, who a few days before had invited him and his two boys to visit him in the country, the clerk replied that in that case Kohlhaas must wait a few moments, as some mounted soldiers would accompany him in obedience to the order of the Prince of Meissen. From his seat on the wagon Kohlhaas asked smilingly whether he thought that his life would not be safe in the house of a friend who had offered to entertain him at his table for a day.

The official answered in a pleasant, joking way that the danger was certainly not very great, adding that the soldiers were not to incommode him in any way. Kohlhaas replied, seriously, that on his arrival in Dresden the Prince of Meissen had left it to his own choice whether he would make use of the guard or not, and as the clerk seemed surprised at this circumstance and with carefully chosen phrases reminded him that he had employed the guard during the whole time of his presence in the city, the horse-dealer related to him the incident which had led to the placing of the soldiers in his house. The clerk assured him that the orders of the Governor of the Palace, Baron Wenk, who was at that moment head of the police force, made it his duty to watch over Kohlhaas' person continually, and begged him, if he would not consent to the escort, to go to the Government Office himself so as to correct the mistake which must exist in the matter. Kohlhaas threw a significant glance at the clerk and, determined to put an end to the matter by hook or by crook, said that he would do so. With a beating heart he got down from the wagon, had the porter carry the children back into the corridor, and while his servant remained before the house with the wagon, Kohlhaas went off to the Government Office, accompanied by the clerk and his guard.

It happened that the Governor of the Palace, Baron Wenk, was busy at the moment inspecting a band of

Nagelschmidt's followers who had been captured in the neighborhood of Leipzig and brought to Dresden the previous evening. The knights who were with the Governor were just questioning the fellows about a great many things which the government was anxious to learn from them, when the horse-dealer entered the room with his escort. The Baron, as soon as he caught sight of Kohlhaas, went up to him and asked him what he wanted, while the knights grew suddenly silent and interrupted the interrogation of the prisoners. When Kohlhaas had respectfully submitted to him his purpose of going to dine with the steward at Lockwitz, and expressed the wish to be allowed to leave behind the soldiers of whom he had no need, the Baron, changing color and seeming to swallow some words of a different nature, answered that Kohlhaas would do well to stay quietly at home and to postpone for the present the feast at the Lockwitz steward's. With that he turned to the clerk, thus cutting short the whole conversation, and told him that the order which he had given him with regard to this man held good, and that the latter must not leave the city unless accompanied by six mounted soldiers.

Kohlhaas asked whether he were a prisoner, and whether he should consider that the amnesty which had been solemnly promised to him before the eyes of the whole world had been broken. At which the Baron, his face turning suddenly a fiery red, wheeled around and, stepping close up to him and looking him in the eyes, answered, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" Then he turned his back upon him and, leaving Kohlhaas standing there, returned to Nagelschmidt's followers.

At this Kohlhaas left the room, and although he realized that the steps he had taken had rendered much more difficult the only means of rescue that remained, namely, flight, he nevertheless was glad he had done as he had, since he was now, on his part, likewise released from obligation to observe the conditions of the amnesty. When he reached home he had the horses unharnessed, and, very sad and shaken, went to his room accompanied by the government clerk. While this man, in a way which aroused the horse-dealer's disgust, assured him that it must all be due to a misunderstanding which would shortly be cleared up, the constables, at a sign from him, bolted all the exits which led from the house into the courtyard. At the same time the clerk assured Kohlhaas that the main entrance at the front of the house still remained open and that he could use it as he pleased.

Nagelschmidt, meanwhile, had been so hard pushed on all sides by constables and soldiers in the woods of the Ore Mountains, that, entirely deprived, as he was, of the necessary means of carrying through a rôle of the kind which he had undertaken, he hit upon the idea of inducing Kohlhaas to take sides with him in reality. As a traveler passing that way had informed him fairly accurately of the status of Kohlhaas' lawsuit in Dresden, he believed that, in spite of the open enmity which existed between them, he could persuade the horse-dealer to enter into a new alliance with him. He therefore sent off one of his men to him with a letter, written in almost unreadable German, to the effect that if he would come to Altenburg and resume command of the band which had gathered there from the remnants of his former troops who had been dispersed, he, Nagelschmidt, was ready to assist him to escape from his imprisonment in Dresden by furnishing him with horses, men, and money. At the same time he promised Kohlhaas that, in the future, he would be more obedient and in general better and more orderly than he had been before; and to prove his faithfulness and devotion he pledged himself to come in person to the outskirts of Dresden in order to effect Kohlhaas' deliverance from his prison.

The fellow charged with delivering this letter had the bad luck, in a village close to Dresden, to be seized with a violent fit, such as he had been subject to from childhood. In this situation, the letter which he was carrying in his vest was found by the persons who came to his assistance; the man himself, as soon as he had recovered, was arrested and transported to the Government Office under guard, accompanied by a large crowd of people. As soon as the Governor of the Palace, Wenk, had read this letter, he went immediately to the palace to see the Elector; here he found present also the President of the Chancery of State, Count Kallheim, and the lords Kunz and Hinz, the former of whom had recovered from his wounds. These gentlemen were of the opinion that Kohlhaas should be arrested without delay and brought to trial on the charge of secret complicity with Nagelschmidt. They went on to demonstrate that such a letter could not have been written unless there had been preceding letters written by the horse-dealer, too, and that it would inevitably result in a wicked and criminal union of their forces for the purpose of plotting fresh iniquities.

The Elector steadfastly refused to violate, merely on the ground of this letter, the safe-conduct he had solemnly promised to Kohlhaas. He was more inclined to believe that Nagelschmidt's letter made it rather probable that no previous connection had existed between them, and all he would do to clear up the matter was to assent, though only after long hesitation, to the President's proposition to have the letter delivered to Kohlhaas by the man whom Nagelschmidt had sent, just as though he had not been arrested, and see whether Kohlhaas would answer it. In accordance with this plan the man, who had been thrown into prison, was taken to the Government Office the next morning. The Governor of the Palace gave him back the letter and, promising him freedom and the remission of the punishment which he had incurred, commanded him to deliver the letter to the horse-dealer as though nothing had happened. As was to be expected, the fellow lent himself to this low trick without hesitation. In apparently mysterious fashion he gained admission to Kohlhaas' room under the pretext of having crabs to sell, with which, in reality, the government clerk had supplied him in the market.

Kohlhaas, who read the letter while the children were playing with the crabs, would certainly have seized the imposter by the collar and handed him over to the soldiers standing before his door, had the circumstances been other than they were. But since, in the existing state of men's minds, even this step was likewise capable of an equivocal interpretation, and as he was fully convinced that nothing in the world could rescue him from the affair in which he was entangled, he gazed sadly into the familiar face of the fellow, asked him where he lived, and bade him return in a few hours' time, when he would inform him of his decision in regard to his master. He told Sternbald, who happened to enter the door, to buy some crabs from the man in the room, and when this business was concluded and both men had gone away without recognizing each other, Kohlhaas sat down and wrote a letter to Nagelschmidt to the following effect: " First, that he accepted his proposition concerning the leadership of his band in Altenburg, and that accordingly, in order to free him from the present arrest in which he was held with his five children, Nagelschmidt should send him a wagon with two horses to Neustadt near Dresden. Also that, to facilitate progress, he would need another team of two horses on the road to Wittenberg, which way, though roundabout, was the only one he could take to come to him, for reasons which it would require too much time to explain. He thought that he would be able to win over by bribery the soldiers who were guarding him, but in case force were necessary he would like to know that he could count on the presence of a couple of stout-hearted, capable, and well-armed men in the suburb of Neustadt. To defray the expenses connected with all these preparations, he was sending Nagelschmidt by his follower a roll of twenty gold crowns concerning the expenditure of which he would settle with him after the affair was concluded. For the rest, Nagelschmidt's presence being unnecessary, he would ask him not to come in person to Dresden to assist at his rescue — nay, rather, he gave him the definite order to remain behind in Altenburg in provisional command of the band which could not be left without a leader.''

When the man returned toward evening, he delivered this letter to him, rewarded him liberally, and impressed upon him that he must take good care of it.

Kohlhaas' intention was to go to Hamburg with his five children and there to take ship for the Levant, the East Indies, or the most distant land where the blue sky stretched above people other than those he knew. For his heart, bowed down by grief, had renounced the hope of ever seeing the black horses fattened, even apart from the reluctance that he felt in making common cause with Nagelschmidt to that end.

Hardly had the fellow delivered this answer of the horse-dealer's to the Governor of the Palace when the Lord High Chancellor was deposed, the President, Count Kallheim, was appointed Chief Justice of the Tribunal in his stead, and Kohlhaas was arrested by a special order of the Elector, heavily loaded with chains, and thrown into the city tower. He was brought to trial upon the basis of this letter, which was posted at every street-corner of the city. When a councilor held it up before Kohlhaas at the bar of the Tribunal and asked whether he acknowledged the handwriting, he answered, ''Yes;'' but to the question as to whether he had anything to say in his defense, he looked down at the ground and replied, ''No.'' He was therefore condemned to be tortured with red-hot pincers by knacker's men, to be drawn and quartered, and his body to be burned between the wheel and the gallows.

Thus stood matters with poor Kohlhaas in Dresden when the Elector of Brandenburg appeared to rescue him from the clutches of arbitrary, superior power, and, in a note laid before the Chancery of State in Dresden, claimed him as a subject of Brandenburg. For the honest City Governor, Sir Heinrich von Geusau, during a walk on the banks of the Spree, had acquainted the Elector with the story of this strange and irreprehensible man, on which occasion, pressed by the questions of the astonished sovereign, he could not avoid mentioning the blame which lay heavy upon the latter's own person through the unwarranted actions of his Arch-Chancellor, Count Siegfried von Kallheim. The Elector was extremely indignant about the matter and after he had called the Arch-Chancellor to account and found that the relationship which he bore to the house of the Tronkas was to blame for it all, he deposed Count Kallheim at once, with more than one token of his displeasure, and appointed Sir Heinrich von Geusau to be Arch-Chancellor in his stead.

Now it so happened that, just at that time, the King of Poland, being at odds with the House of Saxony, for what occasion we do not know, approached the Elector of Brandenburg with repeated and urgent arguments to induce him to make common cause with them against the House of Saxony, and, in consequence of this, the Arch-Chancellor, Sir Geusau, who was not unskilful in such matters, might very well hope that, without imperiling the peace of the whole state to a greater extent than consideration for an individual warrants, he would now be able to fulfil his sovereign's desire to secure justice for Kohlhaas at any cost whatever.

Therefore the Arch-Chancellor did not content himself with demanding, on the score of wholly arbitrary procedure, displeasing to God and man, that Kohlhaas should be unconditionally and immediately surrendered, so that, if guilty of a crime, he might be tried according to the laws of Brandenburg on charges which the Dresden Court might bring against him through an attorney at Berlin; but Sir Heinrich von Geusau even went so far as himself to demand passports for an attorney whom the Elector of Brandenburg wished to send to Dresden in order to secure justice for Kohlhaas against Squire Wenzel Tronka on account of the black horses which had been taken from him on Saxon territory and other flagrant instances of ill-usage and acts of violence. The Chamberlain, Sir Kunz, in the shifting of public offices in Saxony, had been appointed President of the State Chancery, and, hard pressed as he was, desired, for a variety of reasons, not to offend the Court of Berlin. He therefore answered in the name of his sovereign, who had been very greatly cast down by the note he had received, that they wondered at the unfriendliness and unreasonableness which had prompted the government of Brandenburg to contest the right of the Dresden Court to judge Kohlhaas according to their laws for the crimes which he had committed in the land, as it was known to all the world that the latter owned a considerable piece of property in the capital, and he did not himself dispute his qualification as a Saxon citizen.

But as the King of Poland was already assembling an army of five thousand men on the frontier of Saxony to fight for his claims, and as the Arch-Chancellor, Sir Heinrich von Geusau, declared that Kohlhaasenbrück, the place after which the horse-dealer was named, was situated in Brandenburg, and that they would consider the execution of the sentence of death which had been pronounced upon him to be a violation of international law, the Elector of Saxony, upon the advice of the Chamberlain, Sir Kunz himself, who wished to back out of the affair, summoned Prince Christiern of Meissen from his estate, and decided, after a few words with this sagacious nobleman, to surrender Kohlhaas to the Court of Berlin in accordance with their demand.

The Prince, who, although very much displeased with the unseemly blunders which had been committed, was forced to take over the conduct of the Kohlhaas affair at the wish of his hard-pressed master, asked the Elector what charge he now wished to have lodged against the horse-dealer in the Supreme Court at Berlin. As they could not refer to Kohlhaas' fatal letter to Nagelschmidt because of the questionable and obscure circumstances under which it had been written, nor mention the former plundering and burning because of the edict in which the same had been pardoned, the Elector determined to lay before the Emperor's Majesty at Vienna a report concerning the armed invasion of Saxony by Kohlhaas, to make complaint concerning the violation of the public peace established by the Emperor, and to solicit His Majesty, since he was of course not bound by any amnesty, to call Kohlhaas to account therefor before the Court Tribunal at Berlin through an attorney of the Empire.

A week later the horse-dealer, still in chains, was packed into a wagon by the Knight Friedrich of Malzahn, whom the Elector of Brandenburg had sent to Dresden at the head of six troopers; and, together with his five children, who at his request had been collected from various foundling hospitals and orphan asylums, was transported to Berlin.

It so happened that the Elector of Saxony, accompanied by the Chamberlain, Sir Kunz, and his wife, Lady Heloise, daughter of the High Bailiff and sister of the President, not to mention other brilliant ladies and gentlemen, hunting-pages and courtiers, had gone to Dahme at the invitation of the High Bailiff, Count Aloysius of Kallheim, who at that time possessed a large estate on the border of Saxony, and, to entertain the Elector, had organized a large stag-hunt there. Under the shelter of tents gaily decorated with pennons, erected on a hill over against the highroad, the whole company, still covered with the dust of the hunt, was sitting at table, served by pages, while lively music sounded from the trunk of an oak-tree, when Kohlhaas with his escort of troopers came riding slowly along the road from Dresden. The sudden illness of one of Kohlhaas' delicate young children had obliged the Knight of Malzahn, who was his escort, to delay three whole days in Herzberg. Having to answer for this act only to the Prince whom he served, the Knight had not thought it necessary to inform the government of Saxony of the delay. The Elector, with throat half bare, his plumed hat decorated with sprigs of fir, as is the way of hunters, was seated beside Lady Heloise, who had been the first love of his early youth. The charm of the fête which surrounded him having put him in good humor, he said, "Let us go and offer this goblet of wine to the unfortunate man, whoever he may be."

Lady Heloise, casting an entrancing glance at him, got up at once, and, plundering the whole table, filled a silver dish which a page handed her with fruit, cakes, and bread. The entire company had already left the tent in a body, carrying refreshments of every kind, when the High Bailiff came toward them and with an embarrassed air begged them to remain where they were. In answer to the Elector's disconcerted question as to what had happened that he should show such confusion, the High Bailiff turned toward the Chamberlain and answered, stammering, that it was Kohlhaas who was in the wagon. At this piece of news, which none of the company could understand, as it was well known that the horse-dealer had set out six days before, the Chamberlain, Sir Kunz, turning back toward the tent, poured out his glass of wine on the ground. The Elector, flushing scarlet, set his glass down on a plate which a page, at a sign from the Chamberlain, held out to him for this purpose, and while the Knight, Friedrich von Malzahn, respectfully saluting the company, who were unknown to him, passed slowly under the tent ropes that were stretched across the highroad and continued on his way to Dahme, the lords and ladies, at the invitation of the High Bailiff, returned to the tent without taking any further notice of the party. As soon as the Elector had sat down again, the High Bailiff dispatched a messenger secretly to Dahme intending to have the magistrate of that place see to it that the horse-dealer continued his journey immediately; but since the Knight of Malzahn declared positively that, as the day was too far gone, he intended to spend the night in the place, they had to be content to lodge Kohlhaas quietly at a farm-house belonging to the magistrate, which lay off the main road, hidden away among the bushes.

Now it came about toward evening, when all recollection of the incident had been driven from the minds of the lords and ladies by the wine and the abundant dessert they had enjoyed, that the High Bailiff proposed they should again lie in wait for a herd of stags which had shown itself in the vicinity. The whole company took up the suggestion joyfully, and after they had provided themselves with guns went off in pairs, over ditches and hedges, into the near-by forest. Thus it was that the Elector and Lady Heloise, who was hanging on his arm in order to watch the sport, were, to their great astonishment, led by a messenger who had been placed at their service, directly across the court of the house in which Kohlhaas and the Brandenburg troopers were lodged. When Lady Heloise was informed of this she cried, "Your Highness, come!" and playfully concealing inside his silken vest the chain which hung around his neck she added, "Before the crowd follows us let us slip into the farm-house and have a look at the singular man who is spending the night here." The Elector blushed and seized her hand exclaiming, "Heloise! What are you thinking of?" But as she, looking at him with amazement, pulled him along and assured him that no one would ever recognize him in the hunting-costume he had on, and as, moreover, at this very moment a couple of hunting-pages who had already satisfied their curiosity came out of the house, and announced that in truth, on account of an arrangement made by the High Bailiff, neither the Knight nor the horse-dealer knew what company was assembled in the neighborhood of Dahme, the Elector pulled his hat down over his eyes with a smile and said, "Folly, thou rulest the world, and thy throne is a beautiful woman's mouth!"

Kohlhaas was sitting just then on a bundle of straw with his back against the wall, feeding bread and milk to his child who had been taken ill at Herzberg, when Lady Heloise and the Elector entered the farm-house to visit him. To start the conversation, Lady Heloise asked him who he was and what was the matter with the child; also what crime he had committed and where they were taking him with such an escort. Kohlhaas doffed his leather cap to her and, continuing his occupation, made laconic but satisfactory answers to all these questions. The Elector, who was standing behind the hunting-pages, remarked a little leaden locket hanging on a silk string around the horse-dealer's neck, and, since no better topic of conversation offered itself, he asked him what it signified and what was in it. Kohlhaas answered, " Oh, yes, worshipful Sir, this locket! " and with that he slipped it from his neck, opened it, and took out a little piece of paper with writing on it, sealed with a wafer. " There is a strange tale connected with this locket. It may be some seven months ago, on the very day after my wife's funeral — and, as you perhaps know, I had left Kohlhaasenbrück in order to get possession of Squire Tronka, who had done me great wrong — that in the market-town of Jüterbock, through which my expedition led me, the Elector of Saxony and the Elector of Brandenburg had met to discuss I know not what matter. As they had settled it to their liking shortly before evening, they were walking in friendly conversation through the streets of the town in order to take a look at the annual fair which was just being held there with much merry-making. They came upon a gipsy who was sitting on a stool, telling from the calendar the fortunes of the crowd that surrounded her. The two sovereigns asked her jokingly if she did not have something pleasing to reveal to them too? I had just dismounted with my troop at an inn, and happened to be present in the square where this incident occurred, but as I was standing at the entrance of a church, behind all the people, I could not hear what the strange woman said to the two lords. The people began to whisper to one another laughingly that she did not impart her knowledge to every one, and to crowd together to see the spectacle which was preparing, so that I, really more to make room for the curious than out of curiosity on my part, climbed on a bench behind me which was carved in the entrance of the church. From this point of vantage I could see with perfect ease the two sovereigns and the old woman, who was sitting on the stool before them apparently scribbling something down. But hardly had I caught sight of them, when suddenly she got up, leaning on her crutches, and, gazing around at the people, fixed her eye on me, who had never exchanged a word with her nor ever in all my life consulted her art. Pushing her way over to me through the dense crowd, she said, 'There! If the gentleman wishes to know his fortune, he may ask you about it!' And with these words, your Worship, she stretched out her thin bony hands to me and gave me this paper. All the people turned around in my direction, as I said, amazed, 'Grandam, what in the world is this you are giving me?' After mumbling a lot of inaudible nonsense, amid which, however, to my great surprise, I made out my own name, she answered, 'An amulet, Kohlhaas the horse-dealer; take good care of it; some day it will save your life!'—and vanished. Well, Kohlhaas continued good-naturedly, "to tell the truth, close as was the call in Dresden, I did not lose my life; but how I shall fare in Berlin and whether the charm will help me out there too, the future must show."

At these words the Elector seated himself on a bench, and although to Lady Heloise's frightened question as to what was the matter with him, he answered, "Nothing, nothing at all!"—yet, before she could spring forward and catch him in her arms, he had sunk down unconscious to the floor.

The Knight of Malzahn who entered the room at this moment on some errand, exclaimed, "Good heavens, what is the matter with the gentleman!" Lady Heloise cried, "Bring some water!" The hunting-pages raised the Elector and carried him to a bed in the next room, and the consternation reached its height when the Chamberlain, who had been summoned by a page, declared, after repeated vain efforts to restore him to consciousness, that he showed every sign of having been struck by apoplexy. The Cupbearer sent a mounted messenger to Luckau for the doctor, and then, as the Elector opened his eyes, the High Bailiff had him placed in a carriage and transported at a walk to his hunting-castle near-by; this journey, however, caused two more fainting spells after he had arrived there. Not until late the next morning, on the arrival of the doctor from Luckau, did he recover somewhat, though showing definite symptoms of an approaching nervous fever. As soon as he had returned to consciousness he raised himself on his elbow, and his very first question was, "Where is Kohlhaas?" The Chamberlain, misunderstanding the question, said, as he took his hand, that he might set his heart at rest on the subject of that horrible man, as the latter, after that strange and incomprehensible incident, had by his order remained behind in the farm-house at Dahme with the escort from Brandenburg. Assuring the Elector of his most lively sympathy, and protesting that he had most bitterly reproached his wife for her inexcusable indiscretion in bringing about a meeting between him and this man, the Chamberlain went on to ask what could have occurred during the interview to affect his master so strangely and profoundly.

The Elector answered that he was obliged to confess to him that the sight of an insignificant piece of paper, which the man carried about with him in a leaden locket, was to blame for the whole unpleasant incident which had befallen him. To explain the circumstance, he added a variety of other things which the Chamberlain could not understand, then suddenly, clasping the latter's hand in his own, he assured him that the possession of this paper was of the utmost importance to himself and begged Sir Kunz to mount immediately, ride to Dahme, and purchase the paper for him from the horse-dealer at any price. The Chamberlain, who had difficulty in concealing his embarrassment, assured him that, if this piece of paper had any value for him, nothing in the world was more necessary than to conceal the fact from Kohlhaas, for if the latter should receive an indiscreet intimation of it, all the riches the Elector possessed would not be sufficient to buy it from the hands of this vindictive fellow, whose passion for revenge was insatiable. To calm his master he added that they must try to find another method, and that, as the miscreant probably was not especially attached to it for its own sake, perhaps, by using stratagem, they might get possession of the paper, which was of so much importance to the Elector, through the instrumentality of a third wholly disinterested person.

The Elector, wiping away the perspiration, asked if they could not send immediately to Dahme for this purpose and put a stop to the horse-dealer's being transported further for the present until, by some means or other, they had obtained possession of the paper. The Chamberlain, who could hardly believe his senses, replied that unhappily, according to all probable calculations, the horse-dealer must already have left Dahme and be across the border on the soil of Brandenburg; any attempt to interfere there with his being carried away, or actually to put a stop to it altogether, would give rise to difficulties of the most unpleasant and intricate kind, or even to such as it might perchance be impossible to overcome at all. As the Elector silently sank back on the pillow with a look of utter despair, the Chamberlain asked him what the paper contained and by what surprising and inexplicable chance he knew that the contents concerned himself. At this, however, the Elector cast several ambiguous glances at the Chamberlain, whose obligingness he distrusted on this occasion, and gave no answer. He lay there rigid, with his heart beating tumultuously, and looked down at the corner of the handkerchief which he was holding in his hands as if lost in thought. Suddenly he begged the Chamberlain to call to his room the hunting-page, Stein, an active, clever young gentleman whom he had often employed before in affairs of a secret nature, under the pretense that he had some other business to negotiate with him.

After he had explained the matter to the hunting-page and impressed upon him the importance of the paper which was in Kohlhaas' possession, the Elector asked him whether he wished to win an eternal right to his friendship by procuring this paper for him before the horse-dealer reached Berlin. As soon as the page had to some extent grasped the situation, unusual though it was, he assured his master that he would serve him to the utmost of his ability. The Elector therefore charged him to ride after Kohlhaas, and as it would probably be impossible to approach him with money, Stein should, in a cleverly conducted conversation, proffer him life and freedom in exchange for the paper—indeed, if Kohlhaas insisted upon it, he should, though with all possible caution, give him direct assistance in escaping from the hands of the Brandenburg troopers who were convoying him, by furnishing him with horses, men, and money.

The hunting-page, after procuring as a credential a paper written by the Elector's own hand, did immediately set out with several men, and by not sparing the horses' wind he had the good luck to overtake Kohlhaas in a village on the border, where with his five children and the Knight of Malzahn he was eating dinner in the open air before the door of a house. The hunting-page introduced himself to the Knight of Malzahn as a stranger who was passing by and wished to have a look at the extraordinary man whom he was escorting. The Knight at once made him acquainted with Kohlhaas and politely urged him to sit down at the table, and since Malzahn, busied with the preparations for their departure, was obliged to keep coming and going continually, and the troopers were eating their dinner at a table on the other side of the house, the hunting-page soon found an opportunity to reveal to the horse-dealer who he was and on what a peculiar mission he had come to him.

The horse-dealer already knew the name and rank of the man who, at sight of the locket in question, had swooned in the farm-house at Dahme; and to put the finishing touch to the tumult of excitement into which this discovery had thrown him, he needed only an insight into the secrets contained in the paper which, for many reasons, he was determined not to open out of mere curiosity. He answered that, in consideration of the ungenerous and unprincely treatment he had been forced to endure in Dresden in return for his complete willingness to make every possible sacrifice, he would keep the paper. To the hunting-page's question as to what induced him to make such an extraordinary refusal when he was offered in exchange nothing less than life and liberty, Kohlhaas answered, "Noble Sir, if your sovereign should come to me and say, 'Myself and the whole company of those who help me wield my sceptre I will destroy — destroy, you understand, which is, I admit, the dearest wish that my soul cherishes,' I should nevertheless still refuse to give him the paper which is worth more to him than life, and should say to him, 'You have the authority to send me to the scaffold, but I can cause you pain, and I intend to do so!'" And with these words Kohlhaas, with death staring him in the face, called a trooper to him and told him to take a nice bit of food which had been left in the dish. All the rest of the hour which he spent in the place he acted as though he did not see the young nobleman who was sitting at the table, and not until he climbed up on the wagon did he turn around to the hunting-page again and salute him with a parting glance.

When the Elector received this news his condition grew so much worse that for three fateful days the doctor had grave fears for his life, which was being attacked on so many sides at once. However, thanks to his naturally good constitution, after several weeks spent in pain on the sick-bed, he recovered sufficiently, at least, to permit his being placed in a carriage well supplied with pillows and coverings, and brought back to Dresden to take up the affairs of government once more.

As soon as he had arrived in the city he summoned Prince Christiern of Meissen and asked him what had been done about dispatching Judge Eibenmaier, whom the government had thought of sending to Vienna as its attorney in the Kohlhaas affair, in order to lay a complaint before his Imperial Majesty concerning the violation of the public peace proclaimed by the Emperor.

The Prince answered that the Judge, in conformity with the order the Elector had left behind on his departure for Dahme, had set out for Vienna immediately after the arrival of the jurist, Zäuner, whom the Elector of Brandenburg had sent to Dresden as his attorney in order to institute legal proceedings against Squire Wenzel Tronka in regard to the black horses.

The Elector flushed and walked over to his desk, expressing surprise at this haste, since, to his certain knowledge, he had made it clear that because of the necessity for a preliminary consultation with Dr. Luther, who had procured the amnesty for Kohlhaas, he wished to postpone the final departure of Eibenmaier until he should give a more explicit and definite order. At the same time, with an expression of restrained anger, he tossed about some letters and deeds which were lying on his desk. The Prince, after a pause during which he stared in surprise at his master, answered that he was sorry if he had failed to give him satisfaction in this matter; however, he could show the decision of the Council of State enjoining him to send off the attorney at the time mentioned. He added that in the Council of State nothing at all had been said of a consultation with Dr. Luther; that earlier in the affair, it would perhaps have been expedient to pay some regard to this reverend gentleman because of his intervention in Kohlhaas' behalf; but that this was no longer the case, now that the promised amnesty had been violated before the eyes of the world and Kohlhaas had been arrested and surrendered to the Brandenburg courts to be sentenced and executed.

The Elector replied that the error committed in dispatching Eibenmaier was, in fact, not a very serious one; he expressed a wish, however, that, for the present, the latter should not act in Vienna in his official capacity as plaintiff for Saxony, but should await further orders, and begged the Prince to send off to him immediately by a courier the instructions necessary to this end.

The Prince answered that, unfortunately, this order came just one day too late, as Eibenmaier, according to a report which had just arrived that day, had already acted in his capacity as plaintiff and had proceeded with the presentation of the complaint at the State Chancery in Vienna. In answer to the Elector's dismayed question as to how all this was possible in so short a time, he added that three weeks had passed since the departure of this man and that the instructions he had received had charged him to settle the business with all possible dispatch immediately after his arrival in Vienna. A delay, the Prince added, would have been all the more inadvisable in this case, as the Brandenburg attorney, Zäuner, was proceeding against Squire Wenzel Tronka with the most stubborn persistence and had already petitioned the court for the provisional removal of the black horses from the hands of the knacker with a view to their future restoration to good condition, and, in spite of all the arguments of the opposite side, had carried his point.

The Elector, ringing the bell, said, "No matter; it is of no importance," and turning around again toward the Prince asked indifferently how other things were going in Dresden and what had occurred during his absence. Then, incapable of hiding his inner state of mind, he saluted him with a wave of the hand and dismissed him.

That very same day the Elector sent him a written demand for all the official documents concerning Kohlhaas, under the pretext that, on account of the political importance of the affair, he wished to go over it himself. As he could not bear to think of destroying the man from whom alone he could receive information concerning the secrets contained in the paper, he composed an autograph letter to the Emperor; in this he affectionately and urgently requested that, for weighty reasons, which possibly he would explain to him in greater detail after a little while, he be allowed to withdraw for a time, until a further decision had been reached, the complaint which Eibenmaier had entered against Kohlhaas.

The Emperor, in a note drawn up by the State Chancery, replied that the change which seemed suddenly to have taken place in the Elector's mind astonished him exceedingly; that the report which had been furnished him on the part of Saxony had made the Kohlhaas affair a matter which concerned the entire Holy Roman Empire; that, in consequence, he, the Emperor, as head of the same, had felt it his duty to appear before the house of Brandenburg in this, as plaintiff in this affair, and that, therefore, since the Emperor's counsel, Franz Müller, had gone to Berlin in the capacity of attorney in order to call Kohlhaas to account for the violation of the public peace, the complaint could in no wise be withdrawn now and the affair must take its course in conformity with the law.

This letter completely crushed the Elector and, to his utter dismay, private communications from Berlin reached him a short time after, announcing the institution of the lawsuit before the Supreme Court at Berlin and containing the remark that Kohlhaas, in spite of all the efforts of the lawyer assigned him, would in all probability end on the scaffold. The unhappy sovereign determined, therefore, to make one more effort, and in an autograph letter begged the Elector of Brandenburg to spare Kohlhaas' life. He alleged as pretext that the amnesty solemnly promised to this man did not lawfully permit the execution of a death sentence upon him; he assured the Elector that, in spite of the apparent severity with which Kohlhaas had been treated in Saxony, it had never been his intention to allow the latter to die, and described how wretched he should be if the protection which they had pretended to be willing to afford the man from Berlin should, by an unexpected turn of affairs, prove in the end to be more detrimental to him than if he had remained in Dresden and his affair had been decided according to the laws of Saxony.

The Elector of Brandenburg, to whom much of this declaration seemed ambiguous and obscure, answered that the energy with which the attorney of his Majesty the Emperor was proceeding made it absolutely out of the question for him to conform to the wish expressed by the Elector of Saxony and depart from the strict precepts of the law. He remarked that the solicitude thus displayed really went too far, inasmuch as the complaint against Kohlhaas on account of the crimes which had been pardoned in the amnesty had, as a matter of fact, not been entered at the Supreme Court at Berlin by him, the sovereign who had granted the amnesty, but by the supreme head of the Empire who was in no wise bound thereby. At the same time he represented to him how necessary it was to make a fearful example of Kohlhaas in view of the continued outrages of Nagelschmidt, who with unheard-of boldness was already extending his depredations as far as Brandenburg, and begged him, in case he refused to be influenced by these considerations, to apply to His Majesty the Emperor himself, since, if a decree was to be issued in favor of Kohlhaas, this could only be rendered after a declaration on his Majesty's part.

The Elector fell ill again with grief and vexation over all these unsuccessful attempts, and one morning, when the Chamberlain came to pay him a visit, he showed him the letters which he had written to the courts of Vienna and Berlin in the effort to prolong Kohlhaas' life and thus at least gain time in which to get possession of the paper in the latter's hands. The Chamberlain threw himself on his knees before him and begged him by all that he held sacred and dear to tell him what this paper contained. The Elector bade him bolt the doors of the room and sit down on the bed beside him, and after he had grasped his hand and, with a sigh, pressed it to his heart, he began as follows: "Your wife, as I hear, has already told you that the Elector of Brandenburg and I, on the third day of the conference that we held at Jüterbock, came upon a gipsy, and the Elector, lively as he is by nature, determined to destroy by a jest in the presence of all the people the fame of this fantastic woman, whose art had, inappropriately enough, just been the topic of conversation at dinner. He walked up to her table with his arms crossed and demanded from her a sign — one that could be put to the test that very day — to prove the truth of the fortune she was about to tell him, pretending that, even if she were the Roman Sibyl herself, he could not believe her words without it. The woman, hastily taking our measure from head to foot, said that the sign would be that, even before we should leave, the big horned roebuck which the gardener's son was raising in the park, would come to meet us in the market-place where we were standing at that moment. Now you must know that this roebuck, which was destined for the Dresden kitchen, was kept behind lock and key in an inclosure fenced in with high boards and shaded by the oak-trees of the park; and since, moreover, on account of other smaller game and birds, the park in general and also the garden leading to it, were kept carefully locked, it was absolutely impossible to understand how the animal could carry out this strange prediction and come to meet us in the square where we were standing. Nevertheless the Elector, afraid that some trick might be behind it and determined for the sake of the joke to give the lie once and for all to everything else that she might say, sent to the castle, after a short consultation with me, and ordered that the roebuck be instantly killed and prepared for the table within the next few days. Then he turned back to the woman before whom this matter had been transacted aloud, and said, 'Well, go ahead! What have you to disclose to me of the future?' The woman, looking at his hand, said, 'Hail, my Elector and Sovereign! Your Grace will reign for a long time, the house from which you spring will long endure, and your descendants will be great and glorious and will come to exceed in power all the other princes and sovereigns of the world.'

"The Elector, after a pause in which he looked thoughtfully at the woman, said in an undertone, as he took a step toward me, that he was almost sorry now that he had sent off a messenger to ruin the prophecy; and while amid loud rejoicing the money rained down in heaps into the woman's lap from the hands of the knights who followed the Elector, the latter, after feeling in his pocket and adding a gold piece on his own account, asked if the salutation which she was about to reveal to me also had such a silvery sound as his. The woman opened a box that stood beside her and in a leisurely, precise way arranged the money in it according to kind and quantity; then she closed it again, shaded her eyes with her hand as if the sun annoyed her, and looked at me. I repeated the question I had asked her and, while she examined my hand, I added jokingly to the Elector, 'To me, so it seems, she has nothing really agreeable to announce!' At that she seized her crutches, raised herself slowly with their aid from her stool, and, pressing close to me with her hands held before her mysteriously, she whispered audibly in my ear, 'No!' 'Is that so?' I asked confused, and drew back a step before the figure, who with a look cold and lifeless as though from eyes of marble, seated herself once more on the stool behind her; 'from what quarter does danger menace my house?' The woman, taking a piece of charcoal and a paper in her hand and crossing her knees, asked whether she should write it down for me; and as I, really embarrassed, though only because under the existing circumstances there was nothing else for me to do, answered, 'Yes, do so,' she replied, 'Very well! Three things I will write down for you — the name of the last ruler of your house, the year in which he will lose his throne, and the name of the man who through the power of arms will seize it for himself.' Having done this before the eyes of all the people she arose, sealed the paper with a wafer, which she moistened in her withered mouth, and pressed upon it a leaden seal ring which she wore on her middle finger. And as I, curious beyond all words, as you can well imagine, was about to seize the paper, she said, ‘ Not so, Your Highness! ’ and turned and raised one of her crutches; ‘ from that man there, the one with the plumed hat, standing on the bench at the entrance of the church behind all the people — from him you shall redeem it, if it so please you! ’ And with these words, before I had clearly grasped what she was saying, she left me standing in the square, speechless with astonishment, and, clapping shut the box that stood behind her and slinging it over her back, she disappeared in the crowd of people surrounding us, so that I could no longer watch what she was doing. But at this moment, to my great consolation, I must admit, there appeared the knight whom the Elector had sent to the castle, and reported, with a smile hovering on his lips, that the roebuck had been killed and dragged off to the kitchen by two hunters before his very eyes. The Elector, gaily placing his arm in mine with the intention of leading me away from the square, said, ‘ Well then, the prophecy was a commonplace swindle and not worth the time and money which it has cost us! ’ But how great was our astonishment when, even before he had finished speaking, a cry went up around the whole square, and the eyes of all turned toward a large butcher’s dog trotting along from the castle yard. In the kitchen he had seized the roebuck by the neck as a fair prize, and, pursued by men-servants and maids, dropped the animal on the ground three paces in front of us. Thus indeed the woman’s prophecy, which was the pledge for the truth of all that she had uttered, was fulfilled, and the roebuck, although dead to be sure, had come to the market-place to meet us. The lightning which falls from heaven on a winter’s day cannot annihilate more completely than this sight did me, and my first endeavor, as soon as I had excused myself from the company which surrounded me, was to discover immediately the whereabouts of the man with the plumed hat whom the woman had pointed out to me; but none of my people, though sent out on a three days' continuous search, could give me even the remotest kind of information concerning him. And then, friend Kunz, a few weeks ago in the farm-house at Dahme, I saw the man with my own eyes!"

With these words he let go of the Chamberlain's hand and, wiping away the perspiration, sank back again on the couch. The Chamberlain, who considered it a waste of effort to attempt to contradict the Elector's opinion of the incident or to try to make him adopt his own view of the matter, begged him by all means to try to get possession of the paper and afterward to leave the fellow to his fate. But the Elector answered that he saw absolutely no way of doing so, although the thought of having to do without it or perhaps even seeing all knowledge of it perish with this man, brought him to the verge of misery and despair. When asked by his friend whether he had made any attempts to discover the person of the gipsy-woman herself, the Elector replied that the Government Office, in consequence of an order which he had issued under a false pretext, had been searching in vain for this woman throughout the Electorate; in view of these facts, for reasons, however, which he refused to explain in detail, he doubted whether she could ever be discovered in Saxony.

Now it happened that the Chamberlain wished to go to Berlin on account of several considerable pieces of property in the Neumark of Brandenburg which his wife had fallen heir to from the estate of the Arch-Chancellor, Count Kallheim, who had died shortly after being deposed. As Sir Kunz really loved the Elector, he asked, after reflecting for a short time, whether the latter would leave the matter to his discretion; and when his master, pressing his hand affectionately to his breast, answered, "Imagine that you are myself, and secure the paper for me!" the Chamberlain turned over his affairs to a subordinate, hastened his departure by several days, left his wife behind, and set out for Berlin, accompanied only by a few servants.

Kohlhaas, as we have said, had meanwhile arrived in Berlin, and by special order of the Elector of Brandenburg had been placed in a prison for nobles, where, together with his five children, he was made as comfortable as circumstances permitted. Immediately after the appearance of the Imperial attorney from Vienna the horse-dealer was called to account before the bar of the Supreme Court for the violation of the public peace proclaimed throughout the Empire, and although in his answer he objected that, by virtue of the agreement concluded with the Elector of Saxony at Lützen, he could not be prosecuted for the armed invasion of that country and the acts of violence committed at that time, he was nevertheless told for his information that His Majesty the Emperor, whose attorney was making the complaint in this case, could not take that into account. And indeed, after the situation had been explained to him and he had been told that, to offset this, complete satisfaction would be rendered to him in Dresden in his suit against Squire Wenzel Tronka, he very soon acquiesced in the matter.

Thus it happened that, precisely on the day of the arrival of the Chamberlain, judgment was pronounced, and Kohlhaas was condemned to lose his life by the sword, which sentence, however, in the complicated state of affairs, no one believed would be carried out, in spite of its mercy. Indeed the whole city, knowing the good will which the Elector bore Kohlhaas, confidently hoped to see it commuted by an electoral decree to a mere, though possibly long and severe, term of imprisonment.

The Chamberlain, who nevertheless realized that no time was to be lost if the commission given him by his master was to be accomplished, set about his business by giving Kohlhaas an opportunity to get a good look at him, dressed as he was in his ordinary court costume, one morning when the horse-dealer was standing at the window of his prison innocently gazing at the passers-by. As he concluded from a sudden movement of his head that he had noticed him, and with great pleasure observed particularly that he put his hand involuntarily to that part of the chest where the locket was lying, he considered that what had taken place at that moment in Kohlhaas' soul was a sufficient preparation to allow him to go a step further in the attempt to gain possession of the paper. He therefore sent for an old woman who hobbled around on crutches, selling old clothes; he had noticed her in the streets of Berlin among a crowd of other rag-pickers, and in age and costume she seemed to him to correspond fairly well to the woman described to him by the Elector of Saxony. On the supposition that Kohlhaas probably had not fixed very deeply in mind the features of the old gipsy, of whom he had had but a fleeting vision as she handed him the paper, he determined to substitute the aforesaid woman for her and, if it were practicable, to have her act the part of the gipsy before Kohlhaas. In accordance with this plan and in order to fit her for the rôle, he informed her in detail of all that had taken place in Jüterbock between the Elector and the gipsy, and, as he did not know how far the latter had gone in her declarations to Kohlhaas, he did not forget to impress particularly upon the woman the three mysterious items contained in the paper. After he had explained to her what she must disclose in disconnected and incoherent fashion, about certain measures which had been taken to get possession, either by strategy or by force, of this paper which was of the utmost importance to the Saxon court, he charged her to demand of Kohlhaas that he should give the paper to her to keep during a few fateful days, on the pretext that it was no longer safe with him.

As was to be expected, the woman undertook the execution of this business at once on the promise of a considerable reward, a part of which the Chamberlain, at her demand, had to pay over to her in advance. As the mother of Herse, the groom who had fallen at Mühlberg, had permission from the government to visit Kohlhaas at times, and this woman had already known her for several months, she succeeded a few days later in gaining access to the horse-dealer by means of a small gratuity to the warden.

But when the woman entered his room, Kohlhaas, from a seal ring that she wore on her hand and a coral chain that hung round her neck, thought that he recognized in her the very same old gipsy-woman who had handed him the paper in Jüterbock; and since probability is not always on the side of truth, it so happened that here something had occurred which we will indeed relate, but at the same time, to those who wish to question it we must accord full liberty to do so. The Chamberlain had made the most colossal blunder, and in the aged old-clothes woman, whom he had picked up in the streets of Berlin to impersonate the gipsy, he had hit upon the very same mysterious gipsy-woman whom he wished to have impersonated. At least, while leaning on her crutches and stroking the cheeks of the children who, intimidated by her singular appearance, were pressing close to their father, the woman informed the latter that she had returned to Brandenburg from Saxony some time before, and that after an unguarded question which the Chamberlain had hazarded in the streets of Berlin about the gipsy-woman who had been in Jüterbock in the spring of the previous year, she had immediately pressed forward to him, and under a false name had offered herself for the business which he wished to see done.

The horse-dealer remarked such a strange likeness between her and his dead wife Lisbeth that he might have asked the old woman whether she were his wife's grandmother; for not only did her features and her hands — with fingers still shapely and beautiful — and especially the use she made of them when speaking, remind him vividly of Lisbeth; he even noticed on her neck a mole like one with which his wife's neck was marked. With his thoughts in a strange whirl he urged the gipsy to sit down on a chair and asked what it could possibly be that brought her to him on business for the Chamberlain.

While Kohlhaas' old dog snuffed around her knees and wagged his tail as she gently patted his head, the woman answered that she had been commissioned by the Chamberlain to inform him what the three questions of importance for the Court of Saxony were, to which the paper contained the mysterious answer; to warn him of a messenger who was then in Berlin for the purpose of gaining possession of it; and to demand the paper from him on the pretext that it was no longer safe next his heart where he was carrying it. She said that the real purpose for which she had come, however, was to tell him that the threat to get the paper away from him by strategy or by force was an absurd and empty fraud; that under the protection of the Elector of Brandenburg, in whose custody he was, he need not have the least fear for its safety; that the paper was indeed much safer with him than with her, and that he should take good care not to lose possession of it by giving it up to any one, no matter on what pretext. Nevertheless, she concluded, she considered it would be wise to use the paper for the purpose for which she had given it to him at the fair in Jüterbock, to lend a favorable ear to the offer which had been made to him on the frontier through Squire Stein, and in return for life and liberty to surrender the paper, which could be of no further use to him, to the Elector of Saxony.

Kohlhaas, who was exulting over the power which was thus afforded him to wound the heel of his enemy mortally at the very moment when it was treading him in the dust, made answer, "Not for the world, grandam, not for the world!" He pressed the old woman's hand warmly and only asked to know what sort of answers to the tremendous questions were contained in the paper. Taking on her lap the youngest child, who had crouched at her feet, the woman said, "Not for the world, Kohlhaas the horse-dealer, but for this pretty, fair-haired little lad!" and with that she laughed softly at the child, petted and kissed him while he stared at her in wide-eyed surprise, and with her withered hands gave him an apple which she had in her pocket. Kohlhaas answered, in some confusion, that the children themselves, when they were grown, would approve his conduct, and that he could do nothing of greater benefit to them and their grandchildren than to keep the paper. He asked, furthermore, who would insure him against a new deception after the experience he had been through, and whether, in the end, he would not be making a vain sacrifice of the paper to the Elector, as had lately happened in the case of the band of troops which he had collected in Lützen. " If I've once caught a man breaking his word," said he, " I never exchange another with him; and nothing but your command, positive and unequivocal, shall separate me, good grandam, from this paper through which I have been granted satisfaction in such a wonderful fashion for all I have suffered."

The woman set the child down on the floor again and said that in many respects he was right, and that he could do or leave undone what he wished; and with that she took up her crutches again and started to go. Kohlhaas repeated his question regarding the contents of the wonderful paper; she answered hastily that, of course, he could open it, although it would be pure curiosity on his part. He wished to find out about a thousand other things yet, before she left him — who she really was, how she came by the knowledge resident within her, why she had refused to give the magic paper to the Elector for whom it had been written after all, and among so many thousand people had handed it precisely to him, Kohlhaas, who had never consulted her art.

Now it happened that, just at that moment, a noise was heard, caused by several police officials who were mounting the stairway, so that the woman, seized with sudden apprehension at being found by them in these quarters, exclaimed, " Good-by for the present, Kohlhaas, good-by for the present. When we meet again you shall not lack information concerning all these things.'' With that she turned toward the door, crying, '' Farewell, children, farewell!'' Then she kissed the little folks one after the other, and went off.

In the mean time the Elector of Saxony, abandoned to his wretched thoughts, had called in two astrologers, Oldenholm and Olearius by name, who at that time enjoyed a great reputation in Saxony, and had asked their advice concerning the mysterious paper which was of such importance to him and all his descendants. After making a profound investigation of several days' duration in the tower of the Dresden palace, the men could not agree as to whether the prophecy referred to remote centuries or, perhaps, to the present time, with a possible reference to the King of Poland, with whom the relations were still of a very warlike nature. The disquietude, not to say the despair, in which the unhappy sovereign was plunged, was only increased by such learned disputes, and finally was so intensified as to seem to his soul wholly intolerable. In addition, just at this time the Chamberlain charged his wife that before she left for Berlin, whither she was about to follow him, she should adroitly inform the Elector, that, after the failure of an attempt, which he had made with the help of an old woman who had kept out of sight ever since, there was but slight hope of securing the paper in Kohlhaas' possession, inasmuch as the death sentence pronounced against the horse-dealer had now at last been signed by the Elector of Brandenburg after a minute examination of all the legal documents, and the day of execution already set for the Monday after Palm Sunday. At this news the Elector, his heart torn by grief and remorse, shut himself up in his room like a man in utter despair and, tired of life, refused for two days to take food; on the third day he suddenly disappeared from Dresden after sending a short communication to the Government Office with word that he was going to the Prince of Dessau's to hunt.

Where he actually did go and whether he did wend his way toward Dessau, we shall not undertake to say, as the chronicles — which we have diligently compared before reporting events — at this point contradict and offset one another in a very peculiar manner. So much is certain: the Prince of Dessau was incapable of hunting, as he was at this time lying ill in Brunswick at the residence of his uncle, Duke Henry, and it is also certain that Lady Heloise on the evening of the following day arrived in Berlin at the house of her husband, Sir Kunz, the Chamberlain, in the company of a certain Count von Königstein whom she gave out to be her cousin.

In the mean time, on the order of the Elector of Brandenburg, the death sentence was read to Kohlhaas, his chains were removed, and the papers concerning his property, to which papers his right had been denied in Dresden, were returned to him. When the councilors whom the court had dispatched to him asked what disposition he wished to have made of his property after his death, with the help of a notary he made out a will in favor of his children and appointed his honest friend, the bailiff at Kohlhaasenbrück, to be their guardian. After that, nothing could match the peace and contentment of his last days. For in consequence of a singular decree extraordinary issued by the Elector, the prison in which he was kept was soon after thrown open and free entrance was allowed day and night to all his friends, of whom he possessed a great many in the city. He even had the further satisfaction of seeing the theologian, Jacob Freising, enter his prison as a messenger from Dr. Luther, with a letter from the latter's own hand — without doubt a very remarkable document which, however, has since been lost — and of receiving the blessed Holy Communion at the hands of this reverend gentleman in the presence of two deans of Brandenburg, who assisted him in administering it.

Amid general commotion in the city, which could not even yet be weaned from the hope of seeing him saved by an electoral rescript, there now dawned the fateful Monday after Palm Sunday, on which Kohlhaas was to make atonement to the world for the all-too-rash attempt to procure justice for himself within it. Accompanied by a strong guard and conducted by the theologian, Jacob Freising, he was just leaving the gate of his prison with his two lads in his arms — for this favor he had expressly requested at the bar of the court — when among a sorrowful throng of acquaintances, who were pressing his hands in farewell, there stepped up to him, with haggard face, the castellan of the Elector's palace, and gave him a paper which he said an old woman had put in his hands for him. The latter, looking in surprise at the man, whom he scarcely knew, opened the paper. The seal pressed upon the wafer had reminded him at once of the frequently mentioned gipsy-woman, but who can describe the astonishment which filled him when he found the following information contained in it: "Kohlhaas, the Elector of Saxony is in Berlin; he has already preceded you to the place of execution, and, if you care to know, can be recognized by a hat with blue and white plumes. The purpose for which he comes I do not need to tell you. He intends, as soon as you are buried, to have the locket dug up and the paper in it opened and read. Your Lisbeth."

Kohlhaas turned to the castellan in the utmost astonishment and asked him if he knew the marvelous woman who had given him the note. But just as the castellan started to answer "Kohlhaas, the woman—" and then hesitated strangely in the middle of his sentence, the horse-dealer was borne away by the procession which moved on again at that moment, and could not make out what the man, who seemed to be trembling in every limb, finally uttered.

When Kohlhaas arrived at the place of execution he found there the Elector of Brandenburg and his suite, among whom was the Arch-Chancellor, Sir Heinrich von Geusau, halting on horseback, in the midst of an innumerable crowd of people. On the sovereign's right was the

Imperial attorney, Franz Müller, with a copy of the death sentence in his hand; on his left was his own attorney, the jurist Anton Zäuner, with the decree of the Court Tribunal at Dresden. In the middle of the half circle formed by the people stood a herald with a bundle of articles, and the two black horses, fat and glossy, pawing the ground impatiently. For the Arch-Chancellor, Sir Heinrich, had won the suit instituted at Dresden in the name of his master without yielding a single point to Squire Wenzel Tronka. After the horses had been made honorable once more by having a banner waved over their heads, and taken from the knacker, who was feeding them, they had been fattened by the Squire's servants and then, in the market-place in Dresden, had been turned over to the attorney in the presence of a specially appointed commission. Accordingly when Kohlhaas, accompanied by his guard, advanced to the mound where the Elector was awaiting him, the latter said, "Well, Kohlhaas, this is the day on which you receive justice that is your due. Look, I here deliver to you all that was taken from you by force at the Tronka Castle which I, as your sovereign, was bound to procure for you again; here are the black horses, the neck-cloth, the gold gulden, the linen—everything down to the very amount of the bill for medical attention furnished your groom, Herse, who fell at Mühlberg. Are you satisfied with me?"

Kohlhaas set the two children whom he was carrying in his arms down on the ground beside him, and with eyes sparkling with astonished pleasure read the decree which was handed to him at a sign from the Arch-Chancellor. When he also found in it a clause condemning Squire Wenzel Tronka to a punishment of two years' imprisonment, his feelings completely overcame him and he sank down on his knees at some distance from the Elector, with his hands folded across his breast. Rising and laying his hand on the knee of the Arch-Chancellor, he joyfully assured him that his dearest wish on earth had been fulfilled; then he walked over to the horses, examined them and patted their plump necks, and, coming back to the Chancellor, declared with a smile that he was going to present them to his two sons, Henry and Leopold!

The Chancellor, Sir Heinrich von Geusau, looking graciously down upon him from his horse, promised him in the name of the Elector that his last wish should be held sacred and asked him also to dispose of the other articles contained in the bundle, as seemed good to him. Whereupon Kohlhaas called out from the crowd Herse's old mother, whom he had caught sight of in the square, and, giving her the things, said, "Here, grandmother, these belong to you!" The indemnity for the loss of Herse was with the money in the bundle, and this he presented to her also, as a gift to provide care and comfort for her old age. The Elector cried, "Well, Kohlhaas the horse-dealer, now that satisfaction has been rendered you in such fashion, do you, for your part, prepare to give satisfaction to His Majesty the Emperor, whose attorney is standing here, for the violation of the peace he had proclaimed!" Taking off his hat and throwing it on the ground Kohlhaas said that he was ready to do so. He lifted the children once more from the ground and pressed them to his breast; then he gave them over to the bailiff of Kohlhaasenbrück, and while the latter, weeping quietly, led them away from the square, Kohlhaas advanced to the block.

He was just removing his neck-cloth and baring his chest when, throwing a hasty glance around the circle formed by the crowd, he caught sight of the familiar face of the man with blue and white plumes, who was standing quite near him between two knights whose bodies half hid him from view. With a sudden stride which surprised the guard surrounding him, Kohlhaas walked close up to the man, untying the locket from around his neck as he did so. He took out the paper, unsealed it, and read it through; then, without moving his eyes from the man with blue and white plumes, who was already beginning to indulge in sweet hopes, he stuck the paper in his mouth and swallowed it.

At this sight the man with blue and white plumes was seized with convulsions and sank down unconscious. While his companions bent over him in consternation and raised him from the ground, Kohlhaas turned toward the scaffold, where his head fell under the axe of the executioner.

Here ends the story of Kohlhaas. Amid the general lamentations of the people his body was placed in a coffin, and while the bearers raised it from the ground and bore it away to the graveyard in the suburbs for decent burial, the Elector of Brandenburg called to him the sons of the dead man and dubbed them knights, telling the Arch-Chancellor that he wished them to be educated in his school for pages.

The Elector of Saxony, shattered in body and mind, returned shortly afterward to Dresden; details of his subsequent career there must be sought in history.

Some hale and happy descendants of Kohlhaas, however, were still living in Mecklenburg in the last century.

THE PRINCE OF HOMBURG

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Frederick William, *Elector of Brandenburg.*

The Electress.

Princess Natalie of Orange, *his niece, Honorary Colonel of a regiment of Dragoons.*

Field-Marshal Dörfling.

Prince Frederick Arthur of Homburg, *General of cavalry.*

Colonel Kottwitz, *of the regiment of the Princess of Orange.*

Hennings
Count Truchsz } *Infantry Colonels.*

Count Hohenzollern, *of the Elector's suite.*

von der Golz
Count George von Sparren
Stranz
Siegfried von Mörner
Count Reuss
A Sergeant } *Captains of cavalry.*

Officers. Corporals and troopers. Ladies- and Gentlemen-in-waiting. Pages. Lackeys. Servants. People of both sexes, young and old.

Time: 1675.

THE PRINCE OF HOMBURG (1810)

By HEINRICH VON KLEIST

TRANSLATED BY HERMANN HAGEDORN, A.B.

Author of *A Troop of the Guard and Other Poems*

ACT I

Scene: Fehrbellin. A garden laid out in the old French style. In the background, a palace with a terrace from which a broad stair descends. It is night.

SCENE I

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG *sits with head bare and shirt unbuttoned, half-sleeping, half waking, under an oak, binding a wreath. The* ELECTOR, ELECTRESS, PRINCESS NATALIE, COUNT HOHENZOLLERN, CAPTAIN GOLZ *and others come stealthily out of the palace and look down upon him from the balustrade of the terrace. Pages with torches.*

HOHENZOLLERN. The Prince of Homburg, our most valiant cousin,
Who these three days has pressed the flying Swedes
Exultant at the cavalry's forefront,
And scant of breath only today returned
To camp at Fehrbellin — your order said
That he should tarry here provisioning
Three hours at most, and move once more apace
Clear to the Hackel Hills to cope with Wrangel,
Seeking to build redoubts beside the Rhyn?

ELECTOR. 'Tis so.

HOHENZOLLERN. Now having charged the commandants
Of all his squadrons to depart the town
Obedient to the plan, sharp ten at night,
He flings himself exhausted on the straw
Like a hound panting, his exhausted limbs
To rest a little while against the fight
Which waits us at the glimmering of dawn.

ELECTOR. I heard so! Well?

HOHENZOLLERN. Now when the hour strikes
And in the stirrup now the cavalry
Expectant paws the ground before the gates —
Who still absents himself? The Prince of Homburg,
Their chief. With lights they seek the valiant man,
With torches, lanterns, and they find him — where?
[*He takes a torch from the hand of a page.*]
As a somnambulist, look, on that bench,
Whither in sleep, as you would ne'er believe,
The moonshine lured him, vaguely occupied
Imagining himself posterity
And weaving for his brow the crown of fame.

ELECTOR. What!

HOHENZOLL. Oh, indeed! Look down here: there he sits!
[*From the terrace he throws the light on the* PRINCE.]

ELECTOR. In slumber sunk? Impossible!

HOHENZOLLERN. In slumber
Sunk as he is, speak but his name — he drops.
[*Pause.*]

ELECTRESS. Sure as I live, the youth is taken ill.

NATALIE. He needs a doctor's care —

ELECTRESS. We should give help,
Not waste time, gentlemen, meseems, in scorn.

HOHENZOLLERN (*handing back the torch*).
He's sound, you tender-hearted women folk,
By Jove, as sound as I! He'll make the Swede
Aware of that upon tomorrow's field.
It's nothing more, and take my word for it,
Than a perverse and silly trick of the mind.

ELECTOR. By faith, I thought it was a fairy-tale!
Follow me, friends, we'll take a closer look.
[*They descend from the terrace.*]

GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING (*to the pages*).
Back with the torches!

THE ROYAL CASTLE AT BERLIN

HOHENZOLLERN. Leave them, leave them, friends!
These precincts might roar up to heaven in fire
And his soul be no more aware of it
Than the bright stone he wears upon his hand.
[*They surround him, the pages illuminating the scene.*]

ELECTOR (*bending over the* PRINCE).
What leaf is it he binds? Leaf of the willow?
HOHENZOLL. What! Willow-leaf, my lord? It is the bay,
Such as his eyes have noted on the portraits
Of heroes hung in Berlin's armor-hall.
ELECTOR. Where hath he found that in my sandy soil?
HOHENZOLL. The equitable gods may guess at that!
GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.
It may be in the garden, where the gardener
Has nurtured other strange, outlandish plants.
ELECTOR. Most curious, by heaven! But what's the odds?
I know what stirs the heart of this young fool.
HOHENZOLL. Indeed! Tomorrow's clash of arms, my liege!
Astrologers, I'll wager, in his mind
Are weaving stars into a triumph wreath.
[*The* PRINCE *regards the wreath.*]
GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING. Now it is done!
HOHENZOLLERN. A shame, a mortal shame,
That there's no mirror in the neighborhood!
He would draw close to it, vain as any girl,
And try his wreath on, thus, and then again
This other way — as if it were a bonnet!
ELECTOR. By faith! But I must see how far he'll go!
[*The* ELECTOR *takes the wreath from the* PRINCE'S *hand while the latter regards him, flushing. The* ELECTOR *thereupon twines his neck-chain about the wreath and gives it to the* PRINCESS. *The* PRINCE *rises in excitement, but the* ELECTOR *draws back with the* PRINCESS, *still holding the wreath aloft. The* PRINCE *follows her with outstretched arms.*]

THE PRINCE (*whispering*).
Natalie! Oh, my girl! Oh, my beloved!
ELECTOR. Make haste! Away!
HOHENZOLLERN. What did the fool say?
GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING. What?
[*They all ascend the stair to the terrace.*]
THE PRINCE. Frederick, my prince! my father!
HOHENZOLLERN. Hell and devils!
ELECTOR (*backing away from him*).
Open the gate for me!
THE PRINCE. Oh, mother mine!
HOHENZOLL. The raving idiot!
ELECTRESS. Whom did he call thus?
THE PRINCE (*clutching at the wreath*).
Beloved, why do you recoil? My Natalie!
[*He snatches a glove from the* PRINCESS' *hand.*]
HOHENZOLL. Heaven and earth! What laid he hands on there?
COURTIER. The wreath?
NATALIE. No, no!
HOHENZOLLERN (*opening the door*). Hither! This way, my liege!
So the whole scene may vanish from his eye!
ELECTOR. Back to oblivion, with you, oblivion,
Sir Prince of Homburg! On the battle-field,
If you be so disposed, we meet again!
Such matters men attain not in a dream!
[*They all go out; the door crashes shut in the* PRINCE'S *face. Pause.*]

SCENE II

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG *remains standing before the door a moment in perplexity; then dreamily descends from the terrace, the hand holding the glove pressed against his forehead. At the foot of the stair he turns again, gazing up at the door.*

SCENE III

Enter COUNT HOHENZOLLERN *by the wicket below. A page follows him. The* PRINCE OF HOMBURG.

PAGE (*softly*).
Count! Listen, do! Most worshipful Sir Count!
HOHENZOLLERN (*vexed*).
Grasshopper! Well? What's wanted?
PAGE. I am sent —
HOHENZOLL. Speak softly now, don't wake him with your chirping!
Come now! What's up?
PAGE. The Elector sent me hither.
He charges you that, when the Prince awakes,
You breathe no word to him about the jest
It was his pleasure to allow himself.
HOHENZOLLERN (*softly*).
You skip off to the wheatfield for some sleep.
I knew that, hours ago. So run along.

SCENE IV

COUNT HOHENZOLLERN *and the* PRINCE OF HOMBURG.

HOHENZOLLERN (*taking a position some distance behind the* PRINCE *who is still gazing fixedly up toward the terrace*).
Arthur! [*The* PRINCE *drops to the ground.*] And there he lies!
You could not do it better with a bullet.
[*He approaches him.*]
Now I am eager for the fairy-tale
He'll fabricate to show the reason why
Of all the world he chose this place to sleep in.
[*He bends over him.*]
Arthur! Hi! Devil's own! What are you up to?
What are you doing here at dead of night?
THE PRINCE. Ah, dear, old fellow!

HOHENZOLLERN. Well, I'm hanged! See here!
The cavalry's a full hour down the road
And you, their colonel, you lie here and sleep.
THE PRINCE. What cavalry?
HOHENZOLLERN. The Mamelukes, of course!
Sure as I live and breathe, the man's forgot
That he commands the riders of the Mark!
THE PRINCE (*rising*).
My helmet, quick then! My cuirass!
HOHENZOLLERN. Where are they?
THE PRINCE. Off to the right there, Harry.— On the stool.
HOHENZOLL. Where? On the stool?
THE PRINCE. I laid them there, I thought—
HOHENZOLLERN (*regarding him*).
Then go and get them from the stool yourself.
THE PRINCE. What's this glove doing here?
[*He stares at the glove in his hand.*]
HOHENZOLLERN. How should I know?
[*Aside.*] Curses! He must have torn that unobserved
From the lady niece's arm. [*Abruptly.*] Quick now, be off!
What are you waiting for?
THE PRINCE (*casting the glove away again*).
I'm coming, coming.
Hi, Frank! The knave I told to wake me must have—
HOHENZOLLERN (*regarding him*).
It's raving mad he is!
THE PRINCE. Upon my oath,
Harry, my dear, I don't know where I am.
HOHENZOLL. In Fehrbellin, you muddle-headed dreamer—
You're in a by-path of the Castle gardens.
THE PRINCE (*to himself*).
Engulf me, Night! Unwittingly once more
In slumber through the moonshine have I strayed! [*He pulls himself together.*]
Forgive me! Now I know! Last night, recall,

The heat was such one scarce could lie in bed.
I crept exhausted hither to this garden,
And because Night with so sweet tenderness
Encompassed me, fair-haired and odorous Night—
Even as the Persian bride wraps close her lover,
Lo, here I laid my head upon her lap.
What is the clock now?

HOHENZOLLERN. Half an hour of midnight.

THE PRINCE. And you aver the troops are on the march?

HOHENZOLL. Upon my word, sharp, stroke of ten, as planned.
The Princess Orange regiment in van,
By this undoubtedly has reached the heights
Of Hackelwitz, there in the face of Wrangel
To cloak the army's hid approach at dawn.

THE PRINCE. Well, no harm's done. Old Kottwitz captains her
And he knows every purpose of this march.
I should have been compelled, at all events
By two, to come back hither for the council:
Those were the orders. So it's just as well
I stayed in the beginning. Let's be off.
The Elector has no inkling?

HOHENZOLLERN. Bah! How should he?
He's tight abed and snoozing long ago.

[*They are about to depart when the* PRINCE *starts, turns, and picks up the glove.*]

THE PRINCE. I dreamed such an extraordinary dream!
It seemed as though the palace of a king,
Radiant with gold and silver, suddenly
Oped wide its doors, and from its terrace high
The galaxy of those my heart loves best
Came down to me:
The Elector and his Lady and the—third—
What is her name?

HOHENZOLLERN. Whose?
THE PRINCE (*searching his memory*).
Why, the one I mean!
A mute must find his tongue to speak her name.
HOHENZOLL. The Platen girl?
THE PRINCE. Come, come, now!
HOHENZOLLERN. The Ramin?
THE PRINCE. No, no, old fellow!
HOHENZOLLERN. Bork? Or Winterfeld?
THE PRINCE. No, no! My word! You fail to see the pearl
For the bright circlet that but sets it off!
HOHENZOLL. Damn it, then, tell me! I can't guess the face!
What lady do you mean?
THE PRINCE. Well, never mind.
The name has slipped from me since I awoke,
And goes for little in the story.
HOHENZOLLERN. Well,
Let's have it then!
THE PRINCE. But now, don't interrupt me!—
And the Elector of the Jovelike brow,
Holding a wreath of laurel in his hand,
Stands close beside me, and the soul of me
To ravish quite, twines round the jeweled band
That hangs about his neck, and unto one
Gives it to press upon my locks—Oh, friend!
HOHENZOLL. To whom?
THE PRINCE. Oh, friend!
HOHENZOLLERN. To whom then? Come, speak up!
THE PRINCE. I think it must have been the Platen girl.
HOHENZOLL. Platen? Oh, bosh! Not she who's off in Prussia?
THE PRINCE. Really, the Platen girl. Or the Ramin?
HOHENZOLL. Lord, the Ramin! She of the brick-red hair?
The Platen girl with those coy, violet eyes—
They say you fancy *her*.
THE PRINCE. I fancy her—
HOHENZOLL. So, and you say she handed you the wreath?

THE PRINCE. Oh, like some deity of fame she lifts
High up the circlet with its dangling chain
As if to crown a hero. I stretch forth,
Oh, in delight unspeakable, my hands
I stretch to seize it, yearning with my soul
To sink before her feet. But as the odor
That floats above green valleys, by the wind's
Cool breathing is dispelled, the group recedes
Up the high terrace from me; lo, the terrace
Beneath my tread immeasurably distends
To heaven's very gate. I clutch at air
Vainly to right, to left I clutch at air,
Of those I loved hungering to capture one.
In vain! The palace portal opes amain.
A flash of lightning from within engulfs them;
Rattling, the door flies to. Only a glove
I ravish from the sweet dream-creature's arm
In passionate pursuing; and a glove,
By all the gods, awaking, here I hold!
HOHENZOLL. Upon my word — and, you assume, the glove
Must be her glove?
THE PRINCE. Whose?
HOHENZOLLERN. Well, the Platen girl's.
THE PRINCE. Platen! Of course. Or could it be Ramin's?
HOHENZOLLERN (*with a laugh*).
Rogue that you are with your mad fantasies!
Who knows from what exploit delectable
Here in a waking hour with flesh and blood
The glove sticks to your hand, now?
THE PRINCE. Eh? What? I?
With all my love —
HOHENZOLLERN. Oh, well then, what's the odds?
Call it the Platen lady, or Ramin.
There is a Prussian post on Sunday next,
So you can find out by the shortest way
Whether your lady fair has lost a glove.
Off! Twelve o'clock! And we stand here and
jaw!

THE PRINCE (*dreamily into space*).
Yes, you are right. Come, let us go to bed.
But as I had it on my mind to say—
Is the Electress who arrived in camp
Not long since with her niece, the exquisite
Princess of Orange, is she still about?
HOHENZOLL. Why?—I declare the idiot thinks—
THE PRINCE. Why?
I've orders to have thirty mounted men
Escort them safely from the battle-lines.
Ramin has been detailed to lead them.
HOHENZOLLERN. Bosh!
They're gone long since, or just about to go.
The whole night long, Ramin, all rigged for flight,
Has hugged the door. But come. It's stroke o' twelve.
And I, for one, before the fight begins,
I want to get some sleep.

SCENE V

The same. Hall in the palace. In the distance, the sound of cannon. The ELECTRESS *and* PRINCESS NATALIE, *dressed for travel, enter, escorted by a gentleman-in-waiting, and sit down at the side. Ladies-in-waiting. A little later the* ELECTOR *enters with* FIELD-MARSHAL DÖRFLING, *the* PRINCE OF HOMBURG *with the glove in his collar,* COUNT HOHENZOLLERN, COUNT TRUCHSZ, COLONEL HENNINGS, TROOP-CAPTAIN VON DER GOLZ *and several other generals, colonels and minor officers.*

ELECTOR. What is that cannonading?—Is it Götz?
DÖRFLING. It's Colonel Götz, my liege, who yesterday
Pushed forward with the van. An officer
Has come from him already to allay
Your apprehensions ere they come to birth.
A Swedish outpost of a thousand men
Has pressed ahead into the Hackel Hills,
But for those hills Götz stands security
And sends me word that you should lay your plans
As though his van already held them safe.

Elector (*to the officers*).
The Marshal knows the plan. Now, gentlemen,
I beg you take your pens and write it down.
[*The officers assemble on the other side about the* Field-Marshal, *and take out their tablets. The* Elector *turns to a gentleman-in-waiting.*]
Ramin is waiting with the coach outside?

Gentleman-in-waiting.
At once, my sovereign. They are hitching now.

Elector (*seating himself on a chair behind the* Electress *and the* Princess).
Ramin shall escort my belovèd wife,
Convoyed by thirty sturdy cavalrymen.
To Kalkhuhn's, to the chancellor's manor-house.
At Havelberg beyond the Havel, go.
There's not a Swede dare show his face there now.

Electress. The ferry is restored?

Elector. At Havelberg?
I have arranged for it. The day will break
In all events before you come to it. [*Pause.*]
You are so quiet, Natalie, my girl?
What ails the child?

Natalie. Uncle, I am afraid.

Elector. And yet my little girl was not more safe
In her own mother's lap than she is now.
[*Pause.*]

Electress. When do you think that we shall meet again?

Elector. If God grants me the victory, as I
Doubt not He will, in a few days, perhaps.
[*Pages enter and serve the ladies refreshments.* Field-Marshal Dörfling *dictates. The* Prince of Homburg, *pen and tablet in hand, stares at the ladies.*]

Marshal. The battle-plan his Highness has devised
Intends, my lords, in order that the Swedes'
Fugitive host be utterly dispersed,
The severing of their army from the bridges
That guard their rear along the river Rhyn.
Thus Colonel Hennings —
Hennings. Here! [*He writes.*]
Marshal. Who by the will
Of his liege lord commands the army's right,
Shall seek by stealthy passage through the bush
To circumscribe the enemy's left wing,
Fearlessly hurl his force between the foe
And the three bridges; then, joined with Count Truchsz —
Count Truchsz!
Truchsz (*writing*). Here!
Marshal. Thereupon, joined with Count Truchsz —
[*He pauses.*]
Who, meanwhile, facing Wrangel on the heights
Has gained firm footing with his cannonry —
Truchsz (*writing*). Firm footing with his cannonry —
Marshal. You hear it?—
[*Proceeding.*]
Attempt to drive the Swedes into the swamp
Which lies behind their right.
[*A lackey enters.*]
Lackey. Madam, the coach is at the door.
[*The ladies rise.*]
Marshal. The Prince of Homburg —
Elector (*also rising*). Is Ramin at hand?
Lackey. He's in the saddle, waiting at the gates.
[*The royalties take leave of one another.*]
Truchsz (*writing*). Which lies behind their right.

Marshal. The Prince of Homburg —
Where is the Prince of Homburg?
Hohenzollern (*in a whisper*). Arthur!
The Prince (*with a start*). Here!
Hohenzoll. Have you gone mad?
The Prince. My Marshal, to command!
[*He flushes, and, taking out pen and parchment, writes.*]
Marshal. To whom His Highness, trusting that he lead
His force to glory as at Rathenow,
Confides the mounted squadrons of the Mark
[*He hesitates.*]
Though in no way disprizing Colonel Kottwitz
Who shall be aid in counsel and right hand —
[*To* Captain Golz *in a low voice.*]
Is Kottwitz here?
Golz. No, General. He has,
You note, dispatched me hither in his place
To take the battle order from your lips.
[*The* Prince *gazes over toward the ladies again.*]
Marshal (*continuing*).
Takes station in the plain near Hackelwitz
Facing the right wing of the enemy
Well out of range of the artillery fire.
Golz (*writing*). Well out of range of the artillery fire.
[*The* Electress *ties a scarf about the* Princess' *throat. The* Princess, *about to draw on a glove, looks around as if she were in search of something.*]
Elector (*approaches her*).
Dear little girl of mine, what have you lost?
Electress. What are you searching for?
Natalie. Why, Auntie dear,
My glove! I can't imagine —
[*They all look about.*]
Elector (*to the ladies-in-waiting*). Would you mind? —
Electress (*to the* Princess). It's in your hand.

NATALIE. The right glove; but the left?
ELECTOR. You may have left it in your bedroom.
NATALIE. Oh,
Bork, if you will?
ELECTOR (*to the lady-in-waiting*). Quick, quick!
NATALIE. Look on the mantel.
[*The lady-in-waiting goes out.*]
THE PRINCE (*aside*).
Lord of my life? Could I have heard aright?
[*He draws the glove from his collar.*]
MARSHAL (*looking down at the paper which he holds in his hand*).
Well out of range of the artillery fire.
[*Continuing.*]
The Prince's Highness —
THE PRINCE (*regarding now the glove, now the* PRINCESS).
It's *this* glove she's seeking —
MARSHAL. At our lord sovereign's express command —
GOLZ (*writing*). At our lord sovereign's express command —
MARSHAL. Whichever way the tide of battle turn
Shall budge not from his designated place.
THE PRINCE. Quick! Now I'll know in truth if it be hers.
[*He lets the glove fall, together with his handkerchief; then recovers the handkerchief but leaves the glove lying where everybody can see it.*]
MARSHAL (*piqued*). What is His Highness up to?
HOHENZOLLERN (*aside*). Arthur!
THE PRINCE. Here!
HOHENZOLL. Faith, you're possessed!
THE PRINCE. My Marshal, to command!
[*He takes up pen and tablet once more. The* MARSHAL *regards him an instant, questioningly. Pause.*]
GOLZ (*reading, after he has finished writing*).
Shall budge not from his designated place.

MARSHAL (*continues*).
Until, hard pressed by Hennings and by Truchsz —
THE PRINCE (*looking over* GOLZ'S *shoulder*).
Who, my dear Golz? What? I?
GOLZ. Why, yes. Who else?
THE PRINCE. I shall not budge —
GOLZ. That's it.
MARSHAL. Well, have you got it?
THE PRINCE (*aloud*).
Shall budge not from my designated place.
[*He writes.*]
MARSHAL. Until, hard pressed by Hennings and by Truchsz — [*He pauses.*]
The left wing of the enemy, dissolved,
Plunges upon its right, and wavering
The massed battalions crowd into the plain,
Where, in the marsh, criss-crossed by ditch on ditch,
The plan intends that they be wholly crushed.
ELECTOR. Lights, pages! Come, my dear, your arm, and yours.
[*He starts to go out with the* ELECTRESS *and the* PRINCESS.]
MARSHAL. Then he shall let the trumpets sound the charge.
ELECTRESS (*as several officers, bowing and scraping, bid her farewell*).
Pray, let me not disturb you, gentlemen.—
Until we meet again!
[*The* MARSHAL *also bids her good-by.*]
ELECTOR (*suddenly standing still*). Why, here we are!
The lady's glove. Come, quick now! There it is.
GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING. Where?
ELECTOR. At our cousin's, at Prince Homburg's feet.
THE PRINCE. What! At *my* feet! The glove? It is your own?
[*He picks it up and brings it to the* PRINCESS.]

NATALIE. I thank you, noble Prince.
THE PRINCE (*confused*). Then it *is* yours?
NATALIE. Yes, it is mine; it is the one I lost.
[*She takes it and draws it on.*]
ELECTRESS (*turning to the* PRINCESS, *she goes out*).
Farewell! Farewell! Good luck! God keep you safe!
See that erelong we joyously may meet!
[*The* ELECTOR *goes out with the ladies. Attendants, courtiers and pages follow.*]
THE PRINCE (*stands an instant as though struck by a bolt from heaven; then with triumphant step he returns to the group of officers*).
Then he shall let the trumpets sound the charge! [*He pretends to write.*]
MARSHAL (*looking down at his paper*).
Then he shall let the trumpets sound the charge.—
However, the Elector's Highness, lest
Through some mistake the blow should fall too soon— [*He pauses.*]
GOLZ (*writes*). Through some mistake the blow should fall too soon—
THE PRINCE (*aside to* COUNT HOHENZOLLERN *in great perturbation*).
Oh, Harry!
HOHENZOLLERN (*impatiently*).
What's up now? What's in your head?
THE PRINCE. Did you not see?
HOHENZOLLERN. In Satan's name, shut up!
MARSHAL (*continuing*).
Shall send an officer of his staff to him;
Who, mark this well, shall finally transmit
The order for the charge against the foe.
Ere this the trumpets shall not sound the charge.
[*The* PRINCE *gazes dreamily into space.*]
Well, have you got it?

GOLZ (*writes*). Ere this the trumpets shall not sound the charge.
MARSHAL (*in raised tone*).
Your Highness has it down?
THE PRINCE. Marshal?
MARSHAL. I asked
If you had writ it down?
THE PRINCE. About the trumpets?
HOHENZOLLERN (*aside, with emphatic indignation*).
Trumpets be damned! Not till the order—
GOLZ (*in the same tone*). Not
Till he himself—
THE PRINCE (*interrupting*). Naturally not, before—
But then he'll let the trumpets sound the charge. [*He writes. Pause.*]
MARSHAL. And I desire—pray note it, Baron Golz—
Before the action opens, to confer
With Colonel Kottwitz, if it can be done.
GOLZ (*significantly*). He shall receive your message. Rest assured. [*Pause.*]
ELECTOR (*returning*).
What now, my colonels and my generals!
The morning breaks. Have you the orders down?
MARSHAL. The thing is done, my liege. Your battle-plan
Is in all points made clear to your commanders.
ELECTOR (*picking up his hat and gloves*).
And you, I charge, Prince Homburg, learn control!
Recall, you forfeited two victories
Of late, upon the Rhine, so keep your head!
Make me not do without the third today.
My land and throne depend on it, no less.
[*To the officers.*]
Come!—Frank!
A GROOM (*entering*). Here!

ELECTOR. Quick there! Saddle me my gray!
I will be on the field before the sun!
[*He goes out, followed by generals, colonels and minor officers.*]

SCENE VI

THE PRINCE (*coming forward*).
Now, on thine orb, phantasmic creature, Fortune,
Whose veil a faint wind's breathing even now
Lifts as a sail, roll hither! Thou hast touched
My hair in passing; as thou hovered'st near
Already from thy horn of plenty thou
Benignantly hast cast me down a pledge.
Child of the gods, today, O fugitive one,
I will pursue thee on the field of battle,
Seize thee, tear low thy horn of plenty, pour
Wholly thy radiant blessings round my feet,
Though sevenfold chains of iron bind thee fast
To the triumphant chariot of the Swede!
[*Exit.*]

ACT II

Scene: Battlefield of Fehrbellin.

SCENE I

COLONEL KOTTWITZ, COUNT HOHENZOLLERN, CAPTAIN VON DER GOLZ *and other officers enter at the head of the cavalry.*

KOTTWITZ (*outside*). Halt! Squadron, halt! Dismount!
HOHENZOLLERN AND GOLZ (*entering*). Halt—halt!
KOTTWITZ. Hey, friends, who'll help me off my horse?
HOHENZOLLERN AND GOLZ. Here—here!
[*They step outside again.*]

KOTTWITZ (*still outside*).
Thanks to you — ouch! Plague take me! May a son
Be giv'n you for your pains, a noble son
Who'll do the same for you when you grow sear.
[*He enters, followed by* HOHENZOLLERN, GOLZ *and others.*]
Oh, in the saddle I am full of youth!
When I dismount, though, there's a battle on
As though the spirit and the flesh were parting,
In wrath. [*Looking about.*] Where is our chief, the Prince's Highness?
HOHENZOLL. The Prince will momentarily return.
KOTTWITZ. Where has he gone?
HOHENZOLLERN. He rode down to a hamlet,
In foliage hidden, so you passed it by.
He will return erelong.
OFFICER. Last night, they say,
His horse gave him a tumble.
HOHENZOLLERN. So they say.
KOTTWITZ. He fell?
HOHENZOLLERN (*turning*). A matter of no consequence.
His horse shied at the mill, but down his flank
He lightly slipped and did himself no harm.
It is not worth the shadow of a thought.
KOTTWITZ (*ascending a slight elevation*).
A fine day, as I breathe the breath of life!
A day our God, the lofty Lord of earth,
For sweeter things than deadly combat made.
Ruddily gleams the sunlight through the clouds
And with the lark the spirit flutters up
Exultant to the joyous airs of heaven!
GOLZ. Did you succeed in finding Marshal Dörfling?
KOTTWITZ (*coming forward*).
The Devil, no! What does my lord expect?
Am I a bird, an arrow, an idea,
That he should bolt me round the entire field?

I was at Hackel hillock with the van
And with the rearguard down in Hackel vale.
The one man whom I saw not was the Marshal!
Wherefore I made my way back to my men.

GOLZ. He will be ill-content. He had, it seemed,
A matter of some import to confide.

OFFICER. His Highness comes, our commandant, the Prince!

SCENE II

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG *with a black bandage on his left hand. The others as before.*

KOTTWITZ. My young and very noble prince, God greet you!
Look, how I formed the squadrons down that road
While you were tarrying in the nest below.
I do believe you'll say I've done it well.

THE PRINCE. Good morning, Kottwitz! And good morning, friends!
You know that I praise everything you do.

HOHENZOLL. What were you up to in the village, Arthur?
You seem so grave.

THE PRINCE. I — I was in the chapel
That beckoned through the placid village trees;
The bells were ringing, calling men to prayers,
As we passed by, and something urged me on
To kneel before the altar, too, and pray.

KOTTWITZ. A pious gentleman for one so young!
A deed, believe me, that begins with prayer
Must end in glory, victory, and fame.

THE PRINCE. Oh, by the way, I wanted to inquire —
[*He draws the* COUNT *forward a step.*]
Harry, what was it Dörfling said last night
In his directions, that applied to me?

HOHENZOLL. You were distraught. I saw that well enough.

THE PRINCE. Distraught — divided! I scarce know what ailed me.
Dictation always sets my wits awry.
HOHENZOLL. Not much for you this time, as luck would have it.
Hennings and Truchsz, who lead the infantry,
Are designated to attack the foe,
And you are ordered here to halt and stay,
Ready for instant action with the horse,
Until an order summon you to charge.
THE PRINCE (*after a pause, dreamily*).
A curious thing!
HOHENZOLLERN. To what do you refer?
[*He looks at him. A cannon-shot is heard.*]
KOTTWITZ. Ho, gentlemen! Ho, sirs! To horse, to horse!
That shot is Hennings', and the fight is on!
[*They all ascend a slight elevation.*]
THE PRINCE. Who is it? What?
HOHENZOLLERN. It's Colonel Hennings, Arthur,
He's stolen his way about to Wrangel's rear.
Come, you can watch the entire field from here.
GOLZ (*on the hillock*).
At the Rhyn there, how terribly he uncoils!
THE PRINCE (*shading his eyes with his hand*).
Is Hennings over there on our right wing?
1ST OFFICER. Indeed, Your Highness.
THE PRINCE. What the devil then?
Why, yesterday he held our army's right.
[*Cannonade in the distance.*]
KOTTWITZ. Thunder and lightning! Wrangel's cutting loose
At Hennings' now, from twelve loud throats of fire.
1ST OFFICER. I call those *some* redoubts the Swedes have there!

2D OFFICER. By heaven, look, they top the very spire
Rising above the hamlet at their back!
[*Shots near-by.*]
GOLZ. That's Truchsz!
THE PRINCE. Truchsz?
KOTTWITZ. To be sure! Of course, it's Truchsz,
Approaching from the front to his support.
THE PRINCE. What's Truchsz there in the centre for, today?
[*Loud cannonading.*]
GOLZ. Good heavens, look. The village is afire!
3D OFFICER. Afire, as I live!
1ST OFFICER. Afire! Afire!
The flames are darting up the steeple now!
GOLZ. Hey! How the Swedish aides fly right and left!
2D OFFICER. They're in retreat!
KOTTWITZ. Where?
1ST OFFICER. There, at their right flank!
3D OFFICER. In masses! Sure enough! Three regiments!
The intention seems to be to brace the left.
2D OFFICER. My faith! And now the horse are ordered out
To screen the right wing's march!
HOHENZOLLERN (*with a laugh*). Hi! How they'll scamper
When they get ware of us here in the vale!
[*Musketry fire.*]
KOTTWITZ. Look, brothers, look!
2D OFFICER. Hark!
1ST OFFICER. Fire of musketry!
3D OFFICER. They're at each other now in the redoubts!
GOLZ. My God, in my born days I never heard
Such thunder of artillery!
HOHENZOLLERN. Shoot! Shoot!
Burst open wide the bowels of the earth!
The cleft shall be your corpses' sepulchre!
[*Pause. Shouts of victory in the distance.*]
1ST OFFICER. Lord in the heavens, who grants men victories!
Wrangel is in retreat already!

HOHENZOLLERN. No!
GOLZ. By heaven, friends! Look! There on his left flank!
He's drawing back his guns from the redoubts!
ALL. Oh, triumph! Triumph! Victory is ours!
THE PRINCE (*descending from the hillock*).
On, Kottwitz, follow me!
KOTTWITZ. Come, cool now — cool!
THE PRINCE. On! Let the trumpets sound the charge! And on!
KOTTWITZ. Cool, now, I say.
THE PRINCE (*wildly*).
By heav'n and earth and hell!
KOTTWITZ. Our liege's Highness in the ordinance
Commanded we should wait his orders here.
Golz, read the gentlemen the ordinance.
THE PRINCE. Orders? Eh, Kottwitz, do you ride so slow?
Have you not heard the orders of your heart?
KOTTWITZ. Orders?
HOHENZOLLERN. Absurd!
KOTTWITZ. The orders of my heart?
HOHENZOLL. Listen to reason, Arthur!
GOLZ. Here, my chief!
KOTTWITZ (*offended*).
Oh, ho! you give me that, young gentleman? —
The nag you dance about on, at a pinch
I'll tow him home yet at my horse's tail!
March, march, my gentlemen! Trumpets, the charge!
On to the battle, on! Kottwitz is game!
GOLZ (*to* KOTTWITZ).
Never, my colonel, never! No, I swear!
2D OFFICER. Remember, Hennings' not yet at the Rhyn!
1ST OFFICER. Relieve him of his sword!

THE PRINCE. My sword, you say?
[*He pushes him back.*]
Hi, you impertinent boy, who do not even
Know yet the Ten Commandments of the Mark!
Here is your sabre, and the scabbard with it!
[*He tears off the officer's sword together with the belt.*]

1ST OFFICER (*reeling*).
By God, Prince, that's —

THE PRINCE (*threateningly*).
If you don't hold your tongue —

HOHENZOLLERN (*to the officer*).
Silence! You must be mad!

THE PRINCE (*giving up the sword*).
Ho, corporal's guard!
Off to headquarters with the prisoner!
[*To* KOTTWITZ *and the other officers.*]
Now, gentlemen, the countersign: A knave
Who follows not his general to the fight! —
Now, who dares lag?

KOTTWITZ. You heard. Why thunder more?

HOHENZOLLERN (*mollifying*).
It was advice, no more, they sought to give.

KOTTWITZ. On your head be it. I go with you.

THE PRINCE (*somewhat calmed*). Come!
Be it upon my head then. Follow, brothers!
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III

A room in a village. A gentleman-in-waiting, booted and spurred, enters. A peasant and his wife are sitting at a table, at work.

GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.
God greet you, honest folk! Can you make room
To shelter guests beneath your roof?

PEASANT. Indeed!
Gladly, indeed!

THE WIFE. And may one question, whom?

GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.
The highest lady in the land, no less.
Her coach broke down outside the village gates,
And since we hear the victory is won
There'll be no need for farther journeying.

BOTH (*rising*).
The victory won? Heaven!

GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING. What! You haven't heard?
The Swedish army's beaten hip and thigh;
If not forever, for the year at least
The Mark need fear no more their fire and sword!—
Here comes the mother of our people now.

SCENE IV

The ELECTRESS, *pale and distressed, enters with the* PRINCESS NATALIE, *followed by various ladies-in-waiting. The others as before.*

ELECTRESS (*on the threshold*).
Bork! Winterfeld! Come! Let me have your arm.

NATALIE (*going to her*).
Oh, mother mine!

LADIES-IN-WAITING. Heavens, how pale! She is faint.
[*They support her.*]

ELECTRESS. Here, lead me to a chair, I must sit down.
Dead, said he — dead?

NATALIE. Mother, my precious mother!

ELECTRESS. I'll see this bearer of dread news myself.

SCENE V

CAPTAIN VON MÖRNER *enters, wounded, supported by two troopers. The others.*

ELECTRESS. Oh, herald of dismay, what do you bring?

MÖRNER. Oh, precious Madam, what these eyes of mine
To their eternal grief themselves have seen!

ELECTRESS. So be it! Tell!

MÖRNER. The Elector is no more.

NATALIE. Oh, heaven!
Shall such a hideous blow descend on us?
[*She hides her face in her hands.*]

ELECTRESS. Give me report of how he came to fall —
And, as the bolt that strikes the wanderer,
In one last flash lights scarlet-bright the world,
So be your tale. When you are done, may night
Close down upon my head.

MÖRNER (*approaching her, led by the two troopers*).
The Prince of Homburg,
Soon as the enemy, hard pressed by Truchsz,
Reeling broke cover, had brought up his troops
To the attack of Wrangel on the plain;
Two lines he'd pierced and, as they broke, destroyed,
When a strong earthwork hemmed his way; and thence
So murderous a fire on him beat
That, like a field of grain, his cavalry,
Mowed to the earth, went down; twixt bush and hill
He needs must halt to mass his scattered corps.

NATALIE (*to the* ELECTRESS).
Dearest, be strong!

ELECTRESS. Stop, dear. Leave me alone.

MÖRNER. That moment, watching, clear above the dust,
We see our liege beneath the battle-flags
Of Truchsz's regiments ride on the foe.
On his white horse, oh, gloriously he rode,
Sunlit, and lighting the triumphant plain.
Heart-sick with trepidation at the sight
Of him, our liege, bold in the battle's midst,
We gather on a hillock's beetling brow;
When of a sudden the Elector falls,
Horseman and horse, in dust before our eyes.
Two standard-bearers fell across his breast
And overspread his body with their flags.

NATALIE. Oh, mother mine!
FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING. Oh, heaven!
ELECTRESS. Go on, go on!
MÖRNER. At this disastrous spectacle, a pang
Unfathomable seized the Prince's heart;
Like a wild beast, spurred on of hate and vengeance,
Forward he lunged with us at the redoubt.
Flying, we cleared the trench and, at a bound,
The shelt'ring breastwork, bore the garrison down,
Scattered them out across the field, destroyed;
Capturing the Swede's whole panoply of war—
Cannon and standards, kettle-drums and flags.
And had the group of bridges at the Rhyn
Hemmed not our murderous course, not one had lived
Who might have boasted at his father's hearth:
At Fehrbellin I saw the hero fall!
ELECTRESS. Triumph too dearly bought! I like it not.
Give me again the purchase-price it cost.
[*She falls in a faint.*]
FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING.
Help, God in heaven! Her senses flee from her. [NATALIE *is weeping.*]

SCENE VI

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG *enters. The others.*

THE PRINCE. Oh, Natalie, my dearest!
[*Greatly moved, he presses her hand to his heart.*]
NATALIE. Then it is true?
THE PRINCE. Could I but answer No!
Could I but pour my loyal heart's blood out
To call his loyal heart back into life!

NATALIE (*drying her tears*).
Where is his body? Have they found it yet?
THE PRINCE. Until this hour, alas, my labor was
Vengeance on Wrangle only; how could I
Then dedicate myself to such a task?
A horde of men, however, I sent forth
To seek him on the battle-plains of death.
Ere night I do not doubt that he will come.
NATALIE. Who now will lead us in this terrible war
And keep these Swedes in subjugation? Who
Shield us against this world of enemies
His fortune won for us, his high renown?
THE PRINCE (*taking her hand*).
I, lady, take upon myself your cause!
Before the desolate footsteps of your throne
I shall stand guard, an angel with a sword!
The Elector hoped, before the year turned tide,
To see the Marches free. So be it! I
Executor will be of that last will.
NATALIE. My cousin, dearest cousin!
[*She withdraws her hand.*]
THE PRINCE. Natalie!
[*A moment's pause.*]
What holds the future now in store for you?
NATALIE. After this thunderbolt which cleaves the ground
Beneath my very feet, what can I do?
My father and my precious mother rest
Entombed at Amsterdam; in dust and ashes
Dordrecht, my heritage ancestral lies.
Pressed hard by the tyrannic hosts of Spain
Maurice, my kin of Orange, scarcely knows
How he shall shelter his own flesh and blood.
And now the last support that held my fate's
Frail vine upright falls from me to the earth.
Oh, I am orphaned now a second time!

THE PRINCE (*throwing his arm about her waist*).
Oh, friend, sweet friend, were this dark hour not given
To grief, to be its own, thus would I speak:
Oh, twine your branches here about this breast,
Which, blossoming long years in solitude,
Yearns for the wondrous fragrance of your bells.
NATALIE. My dear, good cousin!
THE PRINCE. Will you, will you?
NATALIE. Ah,
If I might grow into its very marrow!
[*She lays her head upon his breast.*]
THE PRINCE. What did you say?
NATALIE. Go now!
THE PRINCE (*holding her*). Into its kernel!
Into the heart's deep kernel, Natalie!
[*He kisses her. She tears herself away.*]
Dear God, were he for whom we grieve but here
To look upon this union! Could we lift
To him our plea: Father, thy benison!
[*He hides his face in his hands;* NATALIE *turns again to the* ELECTRESS.]

SCENE VII

A sergeant enters in haste. The others as before.

SERGEANT. By the Almighty God, my Prince, I scarce
Dare bring to you the rumor that's abroad!—
The Elector lives!
THE PRINCE. He lives!
SERGEANT. By heaven above!
Count Sparren brought the joyful news but now!
NATALIE. Lord of my days! Oh, mother, did you hear?
[*She falls down at the feet of the* ELECTRESS *and embraces her.*]

THE PRINCE. But say! Who brings the news?
SERGEANT. Count George of Sparren,
Who saw him, hale and sound, with his own eyes
At Hackelwitz amid the Truchszian corps.
THE PRINCE. Quick! Run, old man! And bring him in to me!
[*The* SERGEANT *goes out.*]

SCENE VIII

COUNT SPARREN *and the Sergeant enter. The others as before.*

ELECTRESS. Oh, do not cast me twice down the abyss!
NATALIE. No, precious mother mine!
ELECTRESS. And Frederick lives?
NATALIE (*holding her up with both hands*).
The peaks of life receive you once again!
SERGEANT (*entering*).
Here is the officer!
THE PRINCE. Ah, Count von Sparren!
You saw His Highness fresh and well disposed
At Hackelwitz amid the Truchszian corps?
SPARREN. Indeed, Your Highness, in the vicarage court
Where, compassed by his staff, he gave commands
For burial of both the armies' dead.
LADIES-IN-WAITING.
Dear heaven! On thy breast—
[*They embrace.*]
ELECTRESS. My daughter dear!
NATALIE. Oh, but this rapture is well-nigh too great!
[*She buries her face in her aunt's lap.*]
THE PRINCE. Did I not see him, when I stood afar
Heading my cavalry, dashed down to earth,
His horse and he shivered by cannon-shot?
SPARREN. Indeed, the horse pitched with his rider down,
But he who rode him, Prince, was not our liege.
THE PRINCE. What? Not our liege?

NATALIE. Oh, wonderful!
[*She rises and remains standing beside the* ELECTRESS.]
THE PRINCE. Speak then!
Weighty as gold each word sinks to my heart.
SPARREN. Then let me give you tidings of a deed
So moving, ear has never heard its like.
Our country's liege, who, to remonstrance deaf,
Rode his white horse again, the gleaming white
That Froben erstwhile bought for him in England,
Became once more, as ever was the case,
The target for the foe's artillery.
Scarce could the members of his retinue
Within a ring of hundred yards approach:
About there and about, a stream of death,
Hurtled grenades and cannon-shot and shell.
They that had lives to save fled to its banks.
He, the strong swimmer, he alone shrank not,
But beckoning his friends, unswervingly
Made toward the high lands whence the river came.
THE PRINCE. By heaven, i' faith! A gruesome sight it was!
SPARREN. Froben, the Master of the Horse who rode
Closest to him of all, called out to me
" Curses this hour on this white stallion's hide,
I bought in London for a stiff round sum!
I'd part with fifty ducats, I'll be bound,
Could I but veil him with a mouse's gray."
With hot misgiving he draws near and cries,
" Highness, your horse is skittish; grant me leave
To give him just an hour of schooling more."
And leaping from his sorrel at the word
He grasps the bridle of our liege's beast.
Our liege dismounts, still smiling, and replies:

"As long as day is in the sky, I doubt
If he will learn the art you wish to teach.
But give your lesson out beyond those hills
Where the foe's gunners will not heed his fault."
Thereon he mounts the sorrel, Froben's own,
Returning thence to where his duty calls.
But scarce is Froben mounted on the white
When from a breastwork, oh! a murder-shell
Tears him to earth, tears horse and rider low.
A sacrifice to faithfulness, he falls;
And from him not a sound more did we hear.
[*Brief pause.*]

THE PRINCE. He is well paid for! Though I had ten lives
I could not lose them in a better cause!

NATALIE. Valiant old Froben!

ELECTRESS (*in tears*). Admirable man!

NATALIE (*also weeping*).
A meaner soul might well deserve our tears!

THE PRINCE. Enough! To business! Where's the Elector then?
Is Hackelwitz headquarters?

SPARREN. Pardon, sir!
The Elector has proceeded to Berlin
And begs his generals thence to follow him.

THE PRINCE. What? To Berlin? You mean the war is done?

SPARREN. Indeed, I marvel that all this is news.
Count Horn, the Swedish general, has arrived;
And, following his coming, out of hand
The armistice was heralded through camp.
A conference, if I discern aright
The Marshal's meaning, is attached thereto:
Perchance that peace itself may follow soon.

ELECTRESS (*rising*).
Dear God, how wondrously the heavens clear!

THE PRINCE. Come, let us follow straightway to Berlin.
'Twould speed my journey much if you could spare

A little space for me within your coach?—
I've just a dozen words to write to Kottwitz,
And on the instant I'll be at your side.
[*He sits down and writes.*]

ELECTRESS. Indeed, with all my heart!

THE PRINCE (*folds the note and gives it to the Sergeant; then, as he turns again to the* ELECTRESS, *softly lays his arm about* NATALIE'S *waist*).
I have a wish,
A something timorously to confide
I thought I might give vent to on the road.

NATALIE (*tearing herself away*).
Bork! Quick! My scarf, I beg—

ELECTRESS. A wish to me?

FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING.
Princess, the scarf is round your neck.

THE PRINCE (*to the* ELECTRESS). Indeed!
Can you not guess?

ELECTRESS. No—

THE PRINCE. Not a syllable?

ELECTRESS (*abruptly*).
What matter? Not a suppliant on earth
Could I deny today, whate'er he ask,
And you, our battle-hero, least of all!
Come!

THE PRINCE. Mother! Oh, what did you speak? Those words—
May I interpret them to suit me best?

ELECTRESS. Be off, I say! More, later, as we ride!
Come, let me have your arm.

THE PRINCE. Oh, Cæsar Divus!
Lo, I have set a ladder to thy star!
[*He leads the ladies out. Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE IX

Scene: Berlin. Pleasure garden outside the old palace. In the background the palace chapel with a staircase leading up to it. Tolling of bells. The church is brightly illuminated. The body of FROBEN *is carried by and set on a splendid catafalque. The* ELECTOR, FIELD-MARSHAL DÖRFLING, COLONEL HENNINGS, COUNT TRUCHSZ *and several other colonels and minor officers enter. From the opposite side enter various officers with dispatches. In the church as well as in the square are men, women and children of all ages.*

ELECTOR. What man soever led the cavalry
Upon the day of battle, and, before
The force of Colonel Hennings could destroy
The bridges of the foe, of his own will
Broke loose, and forced the enemy to flight
Ere I gave order for it, I assert
That man deserves that he be put to death;
I summon him therefore to be court-martialed.—
Prince Homburg, then, you say, was not the man?

TRUCHSZ. No, my liege lord!

ELECTOR. What proof have you of that?

TRUCHSZ. Men of the cavalry can testify,
Who told me of 't before the fight began:
The Prince fell headlong from his horse, and, hurt
At head and thigh, men found him in a church
Where some one bound his deep and dangerous wounds.

ELECTOR. Enough! Our victory this day is great,
And in the church tomorrow will I bear
My gratitude to God. Yet though it were
Mightier tenfold, still would it not absolve
Him through whom chance has granted it to me.
More battles still than this have I to fight,
And I demand subjection to the law.

Whoever led the cavalry to battle,
I reaffirm has forfeited his head,
And to court-martial herewith order him.—
Come, follow me, my friends, into the church.

SCENE X

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG *enters bearing three Swedish flags, followed by* COLONEL KOTTWITZ, *bearing two,* COUNT HOHENZOLLERN, CAPTAIN GOLZ, COUNT REUSS, *each with a flag; and several other officers, corporals, and troopers carrying flags, kettle-drums and standards.*

DÖRFLING (*spying the* PRINCE OF HOMBURG).
The Prince of Homburg!—Truchsz! What did you mean?
ELECTOR (*amazed*).
Whence came you, Prince?
THE PRINCE (*stepping forward a few paces*).
From Fehrbellin, my liege,
And bring you thence these trophies of success!
[*He lays the three flags before him; the officers, corporals and troopers do likewise, each with his own.*]
ELECTOR (*frigidly*).
I hear that you are wounded, dangerously?
Count Truchsz!
THE PRINCE (*gaily*). Forgive!
COUNT TRUCHSZ. By heaven, I'm amazed!
THE PRINCE. My sorrel fell before the fight began.
This hand a field-leech bandaged up for me
Scarce merits that you call it wounded.
ELECTOR. So?
In spite of it you led the cavalry?
THE PRINCE (*regarding him*).
I? Indeed, I! Must you learn that from me?
Here at your feet I laid the proof of that.
ELECTOR. Relieve him of his sword. He is a prisoner.
DÖRFLING (*taken aback*).
Whom?

ELECTOR (*stepping among the flags*).
Ah, God greet you, Kottwitz!
TRUCHSZ (*aside*). Curses on it!
KOTTWITZ. By God, I'm utterly —
ELECTOR (*looking at him*). What did you say?
Look, what a crop mown for our glory here! —
That flag is of the Swedish Guards, is't not?
[*He takes up a flag, unwinds it and studies it.*]
KOTTWITZ. My liege?
DÖRFLING. My lord and master?
ELECTOR. Ah, indeed!
And from the time of Gustaf Adolf too.
How runs the inscription?
KOTTWITZ. I believe —
DÖRFLING. "*Per aspera ad astra!*"
ELECTOR. That was not verified at Fehrbellin. [*Pause.*]
KOTTWITZ (*hesitantly*).
My liege, grant me a word.
ELECTOR. What is't you wish?
Take all the things — flags, kettle-drums and standards,
And hang them in the church. I plan to-morrow
To use them when we celebrate our triumph!
[*The* ELECTOR *turns to the couriers, takes their dispatches, opens and reads them.*]
KOTTWITZ (*aside*).
That, by the living God, that is too much!
[*After some hesitation, the Colonel takes up his two flags; the other officers and troopers follow suit. Finally, as the three flags of the* PRINCE *remain untouched, he takes up these also, so that he is now bearing five.*]
AN OFFICER (*stepping up to the* PRINCE).
Prince, I must beg your sword.

HOHENZOLLERN (*carrying his flag*). Quiet now, friend.
THE PRINCE. Speak! Am I dreaming? Waking? Living?
Sane?
GOLZ. Prince, give your sword, I counsel, and say
nothing.
THE PRINCE. A prisoner? I?
HOHENZOLLERN. Indeed!
GOLZ. You heard him say it!
THE PRINCE. And may one know the reason why?
HOHENZOLLERN (*emphatically*). Not now!
We told you, at the time, you pressed too soon
Into the battle, when the order was
You should not quit your place till you were
called.
THE PRINCE. Help, help, friends, help! I'm going mad!
GOLZ (*interrupting*). Calm! calm!
THE PRINCE. Were the Mark's armies beaten then?
HOHENZOLLERN (*with a stamp of his foot*). No matter!
The ordinance demands obedience.
THE PRINCE (*bitterly*).
So — so, so, so!
HOHENZOLLERN (*turning away from him*).
It will not cost your head.
GOLZ (*similarly*).
Tomorrow morning, maybe, you'll be free.
[*The* ELECTOR *folds his letters and returns
to the circle of officers.*]
THE PRINCE (*after he has unbuckled his sword*).
My cousin Frederick hopes to play the Brutus
And sees himself, on linen drawn with chalk,
Already seated in the curule chair —
The foreground filled with Swedish battle-
flags,
And on his desk the ordinance of the Mark.
By God, in me he shall not find a son
Who shall revere him 'neath the hangman's
axe!

A German heart of honest cut and grain,
I look for kindness and nobility;
And when he stands before me, frigidly,
This moment, like some ancient man of stone,
I'm sorry for him and I pity him.
[*He gives his sword to the officer and goes out.*]

ELECTOR. Bring him to camp at Fehrbellin, and there
Assemble the court-martial for his trial.
[*He enters the church. The flags follow him, and, while he and his retinue kneel in prayer at* FROBEN'S *coffin, are fastened to the pilasters. Funeral music.*]

ACT III

Scene: Fehrbellin. A prison.

SCENE I

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG. *Two troopers as guards in the rear.* COUNT HOHENZOLLERN *enters.*

THE PRINCE. Faith, now, friend Harry! Welcome, man, you are!
Well, then, I'm free of my imprisonment?

HOHENZOLLERN (*amazed*).
Lord in the heavens be praised!

THE PRINCE. What was that?

HOHENZOLLERN. Free?
So then he's sent you back your sword again?

THE PRINCE. Me? No.

HOHENZOLLERN. No?

THE PRINCE. No.

HOHENZOLLERN. Then how can you be free?

THE PRINCE (*after a pause*).
I thought that *you* were bringing it.—What of it?
HOHENZOLL. I know of nothing.
THE PRINCE. Well, you heard: What of it?
He'll send some other one to let me know.
[*He turns and brings chairs.*]
Sit down. Now come and tell me all the news.
Has he returned, the Elector, from Berlin?
HOHENZOLL. Yes. Yester eve.
THE PRINCE. And did they celebrate
The victory as planned?—Assuredly!
And he was at the church himself, the Elector?
HOHENZOLL. With the Electress and with Natalie.
The church was wonderfully bright with lights;
Upon the palace-square artillery
Through the *Te Deum* spoke with solemn splendor.
The Swedish flags and standards over us
Swung from the church's columns, trophy-wise,
And, on the sovereign's express command,
Your name was spoken from the chancel high,
Your name was spoken, as the victor's name.
THE PRINCE. I heard that.—Well, what other news? What's yours?
Your face, my friend, is scarcely frolicsome.
HOHENZOLL. Have you seen anybody?
THE PRINCE. Golz, just now,
I' the Castle where, you know, I had my trial.
[*Pause.*]
HOHENZOLLERN (*regarding him doubtfully*).
What do you think of your position, Arthur,
Since it has suffered such a curious change?
THE PRINCE. What you and Golz and even the judges think—
The Elector has fulfilled what duty asked,
And now he'll do as well the heart's behest.

Thus he'll address me, gravely: You have erred
(Put in a word perhaps of "death" and "fortress"),
But I grant you your liberty again —
And round the sword that won his victory
Perhaps there'll even twine some mark of grace;
If not that, good; I did not merit that.
HOHENZOLL. Oh, Arthur! [*He pauses.*]
THE PRINCE. Well?
HOHENZOLLERN. Are you so very sure?
THE PRINCE. So I have laid it out. I know he loves me,
He loves me like a son; since early childhood
A thousand signs have amply proven that.
What doubt is in your heart that stirs you so?
Has he not ever seemed to take more joy
Than I myself to see my young fame grow?
All that I am, am I not all through him?
And he should now unkindly tread in dust
The plant himself has nurtured, just because
Too swiftly opulent it flowered forth?
I'll not believe his worst foe could think that —
And far less you who know and cherish him.
HOHENZOLLERN (*significantly*).
Arthur, you've stood your trial in court-martial,
And you believe that still?
THE PRINCE. *Because* of it!
No one, by heaven alive, would go so far
Who did not have a pardon up his sleeve!
Even there, before the judgment bar, it was —
Even there it was, my confidence returned.
Come, was it such a capital offense
Two little seconds ere the order said
To have laid low the stoutness of the Swede?
What other felony is on my conscience?

And could he summon me, unfeelingly,
Before this board of owl-like judges, chanting
Their litanies of bullets and the grave,
Did he not purpose with a sovereign word
To step into their circle like a god?
No, he is gathering this night of cloud
About my head, my friend, that he may dawn
Athwart the gloomy twilight like the sun!
And, faith, this pleasure I begrudge him not!

HOHENZOLL. And yet, they say, the court has spoken judgment.

THE PRINCE. I heard so: death.

HOHENZOLLERN (*amazed*). You know it then — so soon?

THE PRINCE. Golz, who was present when they brought the verdict
Gave me report of how the judgment fell.

HOHENZOLL. My God, man! And it stirred you not at all?

THE PRINCE. Me? Why, not in the least!

HOHENZOLLERN. You maniac!
On what then do you prop your confidence?

THE PRINCE. On what I feel of him! [*He rises.*] No more, I beg.
Why should I fret with insubstantial doubts?
[*He bethinks himself and sits down again. Pause.*]
The court was forced to make its verdict death;
For thus the statute reads by which they judge.
But ere he let that sentence be fulfilled —
Ere, at a kerchief's fall, he yields this heart
That loves him truly, to the muskets' fire,
Ere that, I say, he'll lay his own breast bare
And spill his own blood, drop by drop, in dust.

HOHENZOLL. But, Arthur, I assure you —

THE PRINCE (*petulantly*). Oh, my dear!

HOHENZOLL. The Marshal —

THE PRINCE (*still petulantly*). Come, enough!

HOHENZOLLERN. Hear two words more!
If those make no impression, I'll be mute.
THE PRINCE (*turning to him again*).
I told you, I know all. Well, now, what is it?
HOHENZOLL. Most strange it is, a moment since, the Marshal
Delivered him the warrant for your death.
It leaves him liberty to pardon you,
But he, instead, has given the command
That it be brought him for his signature.
THE PRINCE. No matter, I repeat!
HOHENZOLLERN. No matter?
THE PRINCE. For —
His signature?
HOHENZOLLERN. By faith, I do assure you!
THE PRINCE. The warrant? — No! The verdict —
HOHENZOLLERN. The death warrant.
THE PRINCE. Who was it told you that?
HOHENZOLLERN. The Marshal.
THE PRINCE. When?
HOHENZOLL. Just now.
THE PRINCE. Returning from the sovereign?
HOHENZOLL. The stairs descending from the sovereign.
And added, when he saw my startled face,
That nothing yet was lost, and that the dawn
Would bring another day for pardoning.
But the dead pallor of his lips disproved
Their spoken utterance, with, I fear it — no!
THE PRINCE (*rising*).
He could — I'll not believe it! — bring to birth
Such monstrous resolutions in his heart?
For a defect, scarce visible to the lens,
In the bright diamond he but just received,
Tread in the dust the giver? 'Twere a deed
To burn the Dey of Algiers white: with wings
Like those that silver-gleam on cherubim
To dizen Sardanapalus, and cast

The assembled tyrannies of ancient Rome,
Guiltless as babes that die on mother-breast,
Over upon the favor-hand of God!

HOHENZOLLERN (*who has likewise risen*).
My friend, you must convince yourself of that!

THE PRINCE. The Marshal then was silent, said nought else?

HOHENZOLL. What should he say?

THE PRINCE. Oh, heaven, my hope, my hope!

HOHENZOLL. Come, have you ever done a thing, perchance,
Be it unconsciously or consciously,
That might have given his lofty heart offense?

THE PRINCE. Never!

HOHENZOLLERN. Consider!

THE PRINCE. Never, by high heaven!
The very shadow of his head was sacred.

HOHENZOLL. Do not be angry, Arthur, if I doubt.
Count Horn has come, the Ambassador of Sweden,
And I am told with all authority
His business concerns the Princess Orange.
A word her aunt, the Electress, spoke, they say,
Has cut the sovereign to the very quick;
They say, the lady has already chosen.
Are you in no way tangled up in this?

THE PRINCE. Dear God, what are you saying?

HOHENZOLLERN. Are you? Are you?

THE PRINCE. Oh, friend, I am! And now all things are clear!
It is that wooing that destroys me quite.
I am accountable if she refuse,
Because the Princess is betrothed to me.

HOHENZOLL. You feather-headed fool, what have you done?
How often have I warned you, loyally!

THE PRINCE. Oh, friend! Then help me! Save me! I am lost!

HOHENZOLL. Ay, what expedient saves us in this gloom?
Come, would you like to see her aunt, the Electress?

THE PRINCE (*turning*).
Ho, watch!
TROOPER (*in the background*). Here!
THE PRINCE. Go, and call your officer!
[*He hastily takes a cloak from the wall and puts on a plumed hat lying on the table.*]
HOHENZOLLERN (*as he assists him*)
Adroitly used, this step may spell salvation.
For if the Elector can but make the peace,
By the determined forfeit, with King Charles,
His heart, you soon shall see, will turn to you,
And in brief time you will be free once more.

SCENE II

The officer enters. The others as before.

THE PRINCE (*to the officer*).
Stranz, they have put me in your custody;
Grant me my freedom for an hour's time.
I have some urgent business on my mind.
OFFICER. Not in my custody are you, my lord.
The order given me declares that I
Shall leave you free to go where you desire.
THE PRINCE. Most odd! Then I am not a prisoner?
OFFICER. Your word of honor is a fetter, too.
HOHENZOLLERN (*preparing to go*).
'Twill do! No matter.
THE PRINCE. So. Then fare you well.
HOHENZOLL. The fetter follows hard upon the Prince.
THE PRINCE. I go but to the Castle, to my aunt,
And in two minutes I am back again.
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE III

Room of the ELECTRESS. *The* ELECTRESS *and* NATALIE *enter.*

ELECTRESS. Come, daughter mine, come now! This is your hour.
Count Gustaf Horn, the Swedes' ambassador,

And all the company have left the Castle;
There is a light in Uncle's study still.
Come, put your kerchief on and steal on him,
And see if you can rescue yet your friend.
[*They are about to go.*]

SCENE IV

A lady-in-waiting enters. Others as before.

LADY-IN-WAITING.
Madam, the Prince of Homburg's at the door.
But I am hardly sure that I saw right.
ELECTRESS. Dear God!
NATALIE. Himself?
ELECTRESS. Is he not prisoner?
LADY-IN-WAITING.
He stands without, in plumèd hat and cloak,
And begs in urgent terror to be heard.
ELECTRESS (*distressed*).
Impulsive boy! To go and break his word!
NATALIE. Who knows what may torment him?
ELECTRESS (*after a moment in thought*). Let him come!
[*She seats herself.*]

SCENE V

The PRINCE OF HOMBURG *enters. The others as before.*

THE PRINCE (*throwing himself at the feet of the* ELECTRESS).
Oh, mother!
ELECTRESS. Prince! What are you doing here?
THE PRINCE. Oh, let me clasp your knees, oh, mother mine!
ELECTRESS (*with suppressed emotion*).
You are a prisoner, Prince, and you come hither?
Why will you heap new guilt upon the old?
THE PRINCE (*urgently*).
Oh, do you know what they have done?

ELECTRESS. Yes, all.
But what can I do, helpless I, for you?
THE PRINCE. You would not speak thus, mother mine, if death
Had ever terribly encompassed you
As it doth me. With potencies of heaven,
You and my lady, these who serve you, all
The world that rings me round, seem blest to save.
The very stable-boy, the meanest, least,
That tends your horses, pleading I could hang
About his neck, crying: Oh, save me, thou!
I, only I, alone on God's wide earth
Am helpless, desolate, and impotent.
ELECTRESS. You are beside yourself! What has occurred?
THE PRINCE. Oh, on the way that led me to your side,
I saw in torchlight where they dug the grave
That on the morrow shall receive my bones!
Look, Aunt, these eyes that gaze upon you now,
These eyes they would eclipse with night, this breast
Pierce and transpierce with murderous musketry.
The windows on the Market that shall close
Upon the weary show are all reserved;
And one who, standing on life's pinnacle,
Today beholds the future like a realm
Of faery spread afar, tomorrow lies
Stinking within the compass of two boards,
And over him a stone recounts: *He was.*
[*The* PRINCESS, *who until now has stood in the background supporting herself on the shoulder of one of the ladies-in-waiting, sinks into a chair, deeply moved at his words, and begins to weep.*]
ELECTRESS. My son, if such should be the will of heaven,
You will go forth with courage and calm soul.

THE PRINCE. God's world, O mother, is so beautiful!
Oh, let me not, before my hour strike,
Descend, I plead, to those black shadow-forms!
Why, why can it be nothing but the bullet?
Let him depose me from my offices,
With rank cashierment, if the law demands,
Dismiss me from the army. God of heaven!
Since I beheld my grave, life, life, I want,
And do not ask if it be kept with honor.

ELECTRESS. Arise, my son, arise! What were those words?
You are too deeply moved. Control yourself!

THE PRINCE. Oh, Aunt, not ere you promise on your soul,
With a prostration that shall save my life
Pleading to go before the sovereign presence.
Hedwig, your childhood friend, gave me to you,
Dying at Homburg, saying as she died:
Be you his mother when I am no more.
Moved to the depths, kneeling beside her bed,
Over her spent hand bending, you replied:
Yea, he shall be to me as mine own child.
Now, I remind you of the vow you made!
Go to him, go, as though I were your child,
Crying, I plead for mercy! Set him free!
Oh, and return to me, and say: 'Tis so!

ELECTRESS (*weeping*).
Belovèd son! All has been done, erewhile.
But all my supplications were in vain.

THE PRINCE. I give up every claim to happiness.
And tell him this, forget it not, that I
Desire Natalie no more, for her
All tenderness within my heart is quenched.
Free as the doe upon the meads is she,
Her hand and lips, as though I'd never been,
Freely let her bestow, and if it be
The Swede Karl Gustaf, I commend her choice.
I will go seek my lands upon the Rhine.
There will I build and raze again to earth
With sweating brow, and sow and gather in,

As though for wife and babe, enjoy alone;
And when the harvest's gathered, sow again,
And round and round the treadmill chase my days
Until at evening they sink down, and die.

ELECTRESS. Enough! Now take your way home to your prison —
That is the first demand my favor makes.

THE PRINCE (*rises and turns toward the* PRINCESS).
Poor little girl, you weep! The sun today
Lights all your expectations to their grave!
Your heart decided from the first on me;
Indeed, your look declares, that, true as gold,
You ne'er shall dedicate your heart anew.
Oh, what can I, poor devil, say to comfort?
Go to the Maiden's Chapter on the Main,
I counsel you, go to your cousin Thurn.
Seek in the hills a boy, light-curled as I,
Buy him with gold and silver, to your breast
Press him, and teach his lips to falter: Mother.
And when he grows to manhood, show him well
How men draw shut the eyelids of the dead.
That is the only joy that lies your way!

NATALIE (*bravely and impressively, as she rises and lays her hand in his*).
Return, young hero, to your prison walls,
And, on your passage, imperturbably
Regard once more the grave they dug for you.
It is not gloomier, nor more wide at all
Than those the battle showed a thousand times.
Meanwhile, since I am true to you till death,
A saving word I'll chance, unto my kin.
It may avail, perhaps, to move his heart
And disenthrall you from all misery.
[*Pause.*]

THE PRINCE (*folding his hands, as he stands lost in contemplation of her*).
An you had pinions on your shoulders, maid,
Truly I should be sure you were an angel!
Dear God, did I hear right? You speak for me?
Where has the quiver of your speech till now
Lain hid, dear child, that you should dare approach
The sovereign in matters such as this?
Oh, light of hope, reviving me once more!

NATALIE. The darts that find the marrow God will hand me!
But if the Elector cannot move the law's
Outspoken word, cannot — so be it! Then
Bravely to him the brave man will submit.
And he, the conqueror a thousand times,
Living, will know to conquer too in death!

ELECTRESS. Make haste! The favorable hour flies by!

THE PRINCE. Now may all holy spirits guard your way!
Farewell, farewell! Whate'er the outcome be,
Grant me a word to tell me how you fared.
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT IV

Scene: Room of the ELECTOR.

SCENE I

The ELECTOR *is standing with documents in his hand near a table set with lights.* NATALIE *enters through the centre door and, still some distance away, falls on her knees to him.*

NATALIE. My noble uncle Frederick of the Mark!

ELECTOR (*laying the papers aside*).
My Natalie! [*He seeks to raise her.*]

NATALIE. No, no!

ELECTOR. What is your wish?

Natalie. As it behooves me, at your feet in dust
To plead your pardon for my cousin Homburg.
Not for myself I wish to know him safe —
My heart desires him and confesses it —
Not for myself I wish to know him safe;
Let him go wed whatever wife he will.
I only ask, dear uncle, that he live,
Free, independent, unallied, unbound,
Even as a flower in which I find delight;
For this I plead, my sovereign lord and friend,
And such entreaty you will heed, I know.

Elector (*raising her to her feet*).
My little girl! What words escaped your lips?
Are you aware of how your cousin Homburg
Lately offended?

Natalie. But, dear uncle!

Elector. Well?
Was it so slight?

Natalie. Oh, this blond fault, blue-eyed,
Which even ere it faltered: Lo, I pray!
Forgiveness should raise up from the earth —
Surely you will not spurn it with your foot?
Why, for its mother's sake, for her who bore it,
You'll press it to your breast and cry: "Weep not!
For you are dear as loyalty herself."
Was it not ardor for your name's renown
That lured him in the fight's tumultuous midst
To burst apart the confines of the law?
And oh, once he had burst the bonds asunder,
Trod he not bravely on the serpent's head?
To crown him first because he triumphs, then
Put him to death — that, surely, history
Will not demand of you. Dear uncle mine,
That were so stoical and so sublime
That men might almost deem it was inhuman!
And God made nothing more humane than you.

ELECTOR. Sweet child, consider! If I were a tyrant,
I am indeed aware your words ere now
Had thawed the heart beneath the iron breast.
But this I put to you: Have I the right
To quash the verdict which the court has passed?
What would the issue be of such an act?
NATALIE. For whom? For you?
ELECTOR. For me? No! Bah! For me!
My girl, know you no higher law than me!
Have you no inkling of a sanctuary
That in the camp men call the fatherland?
NATALIE. My liege! Why fret your soul? Because of such
Upstirring of your grace, this fatherland
Will not this moment crash to rack and ruin!
The camp has been your school. And, look, what there
You term unlawfulness, this act, this free
Suppression of the verdict of the court,
Appears to me the very soul of law.
The laws of war, I am aware, must rule;
The heart, however, has its charter, too.
The fatherland your hands upbuilt for us,
My noble uncle, is a fortress strong,
And other greater storms indeed will bear
Than this unnecessary victory.
Majestically through the years to be
It shall uprise, beneath your line expand,
Grow beautiful with towers, luxuriant,
A fairy country, the felicity
Of those who love it, and the dread of foes.
It does not need the cold cementing seal
Of a friend's life-blood to outlast the calm
And glorious autumn of my uncle's days!
ELECTOR. And cousin Homburg thinks this?
NATALIE. Cousin Homburg?

ELECTOR. Does he believe it matters not at all
If license rule the fatherland, or law?
NATALIE. This poor dear boy!
ELECTOR. Well, now?
NATALIE. Oh, uncle dear,
To that I have no answer save my tears!
ELECTOR (*in surprise*).
Why that, my little girl? What has befallen?
NATALIE (*falteringly*).
He thinks of nothing now but one thing: rescue!
The barrels at the marksmen's shoulders peer
So ghastlily, that, giddy and amazed,
Desire is mute, save one desire: To live.
The whole great nation of the Mark might sink
To wrack mid flare and thunderbolt; and he
Stand by nor even ask: What comes to pass? —
Oh, what a hero's heart have you brought low?
[*She turns away, sobbing.*]
ELECTOR (*utterly amazed*).
No, dearest Natalie! No, no, indeed!
Impossible! — He pleads for clemency?
NATALIE. If you had only, only not condemned him!
ELECTOR. Come, tell me, come! He pleads for clemency?
What has befallen, child? Why do you sob?
You met? Come, tell me all. You spoke with him?
NATALIE (*pressed against his breast*).
In my aunt's chambers but a moment since,
Whither in mantle, lo, and plumèd hat
Stealthily through the screening dusk he came —
Furtive, perturbed, abashed, unworthy all,
A miserable, pitiable sight.
I never guessed a man could sink so low
Whom history applauded as her hero.

For look — I am a woman and I shrink
From the mere worm that draws too near my foot;
But so undone, so void of all control,
So unheroic quite, though lion-like
Death fiercely came, he should not find me thus!
Oh, what is human greatness, human fame!

ELECTOR (*confused*).
Well, then, by God of heaven and of earth!
Take courage, then, my girl, for he is free!

NATALIE. What, my liege lord?

ELECTOR. I pardon him, I say!
I'll send the necessary word at once.

NATALIE. Oh, dearest, is it really true?

ELECTOR. You heard.

NATALIE. You will forgive him? And he need not die?

ELECTOR. Upon my word! I swear it! How shall I
Oppose myself to such a warrior's judgment?
Within my heart of hearts, as you know well,
I deeply do esteem his inner sense;
If he can say the verdict is unjust,
I cancel the indictment; he is free!
[*He brings her a chair.*]
Will you sit here and wait a little while?
[*He goes to the table, seats himself and writes. Pause.*]

NATALIE (*softly*).
Why dost thou knock so at thy house, my heart?

ELECTOR (*writing*).
The Prince is over in the Castle?

NATALIE. Pardon!
He has returned to his captivity.

ELECTOR (*finishes his letter and seals it; thereupon he returns with the letter to the* PRINCESS).
Well, well, my little niece, my daughter, wept!

And I, whose place it is to make her glad
Was forced to cloud the heaven of her fair
eyes! [*He puts his arm about her.*]
Will you go bring the note to him yourself?

NATALIE. How? To the City Hall?

ELECTOR (*presses the letter into her hand*).
Why not? Ho, lackeys!
[*Enter lackeys.*]
Go, have the carriage up! Her ladyship
Has urgent business with Colonel Homburg.
[*The lackeys go out.*]
Now he can thank you for his life forthwith.
[*He embraces her.*]
Dear child, and do you like me now once more?

NATALIE (*after a pause*).
I do not know and do not seek to know
What woke your favor, liege, so suddenly.
But truly this, I feel this in my heart,
You would not make ignoble sport of me.
The letter hold whate'er it may — I trust
That it hold pardon — and I thank you for it.
[*She kisses his hand.*]

ELECTOR. Indeed, my little girl, indeed. As sure
As pardon lies in Cousin Homburg's wish.

SCENE II

Room of the PRINCESS. *Enter* PRINCESS NATALIE, *followed by two ladies-in-waiting and Captain of Cavalry,* COUNT REUSS.

NATALIE (*precipitantly*).
What is it, Count? About my regiment?
Is it of moment? Can it wait a day?

REUSS (*handing her a letter*).
Madam, a note for you from Colonel Kottwitz.

NATALIE (*opening it*).
Quick, give it me! What's in it?

REUSS. A petition,
Frankly addressed, though deferentially,
As you will note, to our liege lord, his Highness,
In furtherance of our chief, the Prince of Homburg.

NATALIE (*reading*).
"Petition, loyally presented by
The regiment of Princess Orange"—so.
[*Pause.*]
This document—whose hand composed it, pray?

REUSS. As the formations of the dizzy script
May let you guess, by none but Colonel Kottwitz.
His noble name stands foremost on the list.

NATALIE. The thirty signatures which follow it?

REUSS. The names of officers, most noble lady,
Each following each according to his rank.

NATALIE. And they sent me the supplication—me?

REUSS. My lady, most submissively to beg
If you, our colonel, likewise, at their head
Will fill the space left vacant, with your name?
[*Pause.*]

NATALIE. Indeed, I hear, the Prince, my noble kinsman,
By our lord's own volition shall be freed,
Wherefore there scarce is need for such a step.

REUSS (*delighted*).
What? Truly?

NATALIE. Yet I'll not deny my hand
Upon a document, which, wisely used,
May prove a weight upon the scales to turn
Our sovereign's decision—even prove
Welcome, mayhap, to introduce the issue.
According to your wish, therefore, I set
Myself here at your head and write my name.
[*She goes to a desk and is about to write.*]

REUSS. Indeed, you have our lively gratitude!
[*Pause.*]

NATALIE (*turning to him again*).
My regiment alone I find, Count Reuss!
Why do I miss the Bomsdorf Cuirassiers
And the dragoons of Götz and Anhalt-Pless?

REUSS. Not, as perchance you fear, because their hearts
Are cooler in their throbbing than our own.
It proves unfortunate for our petition
That Kottwitz is in garrison apart
At Arnstein, while the other regiments
Are quartered in the city here. Wherefore
The document lacks freedom easily
In all directions to expand its force.

NATALIE. Yet, as it stands, the plea seems all too thin.—
Are you sure, Count, if you were on the spot
To interview the gentlemen now here,
That they as well would sign the document?

REUSS. Here in the city, madam? Head for head!
The entire cavalry would pledge itself
With signatures. By God, I do believe
That a petition might be safely launched
Amid the entire army of the Mark!

NATALIE (*after a pause*).
Why does not some one send out officers
To carry on the matter in the camp?

REUSS. Pardon! The Colonel put his foot on that.
He said that he desired to do no act
That men might christen with an ugly name.

NATALIE. Queer gentleman! Now bold, now timorous!
But it occurs to me that happily
The Elector, pressed by other business,
Charged me to issue word that Kottwitz, cribbed
Too close in his position, march back hither.
I will sit down at once and do it!
[*She sits down and writes.*]

Reuss. By Heaven,
Most excellent, my lady! An event
That could not timelier prove for our petition!

Natalie (*as she writes*).
Use it, Count Reuss, as well as you know how.
[*She finishes her note, seals it and rises to her feet again.*]
Meanwhile this note, you understand, remains
In your portfolio; you will not go
To Arnstein with it, nor convey 't to Kottwitz
Until I give more definite command.
[*She gives him the letter.*]

A Lackey (*entering*).
According to the sovereign's order, madam,
The coach is ready in the yard, and waiting.

Natalie. Go, call it to the door. I'll come at once.
[*Pause, during which she steps thoughtfully to the table and draws on her gloves.*]
Count, I desire to interview Prince Homburg.
Will you escort me thither? In my coach
There is a place I put at your disposal.

Reuss. Madam, a great distinction, I assure you —
[*He offers her his arm.*]

Natalie (*to the ladies-in-waiting*).
Follow, my friends! — It well may be that there
I shall decide about the note erelong.
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

Scene III

The Prince's *cell. The* Prince of Homburg *hangs his hat on the wall and sinks, carelessly reclining, on a mattress spread out on the floor.*

The Prince. The dervish calls all life a pilgrimage,
And that, a brief one. True! — Of two short spans
This side of earth to two short spans below.
I will recline upon the middle path.
The man who bears his head erect today

No later than tomorrow on his breast
Bows it, all tremulous. Another dawn,
And, lo, it lies a skull beside his heel!
Indeed, there is a sun, they say, that shines
On fields beyond e'en brighter than these fields.
I do believe it; only pity 'tis
The eye, that shall perceive the splendor, rots.

SCENE IV

Enter PRINCESS NATALIE *on the arm of* COUNT REUSS, *and followed by ladies-in-waiting. A footman with a torch precedes them. The* PRINCE OF HOMBURG.

FOOTMAN. Her Highness Princess Natalie of Orange!
THE PRINCE (*rising*).
Natalie!
FOOTMAN. Here she comes herself!
NATALIE (*with a bow to the* COUNT). I beg
Leave us a little moment to ourselves.
[COUNT REUSS *and the footman go.*]
THE PRINCE. Beloved lady!
NATALIE. Dear good cousin mine!
THE PRINCE (*leading her up stage*).
What is your news? Speak! How stand things with me?
NATALIE. Well. All is well, just as I prophesied.
Pardoned are you, and free; here is a letter
Writ by his hand to verify my words.
THE PRINCE. It cannot be! No, no! It is a dream!
NATALIE. Read! Read the letter! See it for yourself!
THE PRINCE (*reading*).
"My Prince of Homburg, when I made you prisoner
Because of your too premature attack,
I thought that I was doing what was right—
No more; and reckoned on your acquiescence.

If you believe that I have been unjust,
Tell me, I beg you in a word or two,
And forthwith I will send you back your sword."

[NATALIE *turns pale. Pause. The* PRINCE *regards her questioningly.*]

NATALIE (*feigning sudden joy*).
Well, there it stands! It only needs two words,
My dear, sweet friend!

[*She presses his hand.*]

THE PRINCE. Ah, precious lady mine!

NATALIE. Oh, blessed hour that dawns across my world!
Here, take it, take the pen, take it and write.

THE PRINCE. And here the signature?

NATALIE. The F — his mark!
Oh, Bork! Be glad with me. His clemency
Is limitless, I knew it, as the sea!
Do bring a chair, for he must write at once.

THE PRINCE. He says, if I believed —

NATALIE (*interrupting*). Why, yes, of course!
Quick now! Sit down. I'll tell you what to say. [*She sets a chair in place for him.*]

THE PRINCE. I wish to read the letter once again.

NATALIE (*tearing the letter from his hand*).
Why so? Did you not see the pit already
Yawning beneath you in the graveyard yonder?
The time is urgent. Come, sit down and write.

THE PRINCE (*smiling*).
Truly, you act as though it had the power
To plump down, panther-fashion, on my back.

[*He sits down and seizes a pen.*]

NATALIE (*turning away with a sob*).
Write, if you do not want to make me cross.

[*The* PRINCE *rings for a lackey, who enters.*]

THE PRINCE. Bring pen and paper, seal and sealing-wax.
[*The lackey, having collected these and given them to the* PRINCE, *goes out. The* PRINCE *writes. Pause, during which he tears the letter he has begun in two and throws the pieces under the table.*]
A silly opening!
[*He takes another sheet.*]
NATALIE (*picking up the letter*). What did you say?
Good heavens! Why, it's right, it's excellent.
THE PRINCE (*under his breath*).
Bah! That's a blackguard's wording, not a Prince's.
I'll try to put it in some other way.
[*Pause. He clutches at the* ELECTOR'S *letter which the* PRINCESS *holds in her hand.*]
What is it, anyway, his letter says?
NATALIE (*keeping it from him*).
Nothing at all!
THE PRINCE. Give it to me!
NATALIE. You read it!
THE PRINCE (*snatches it from her*).
What if I did? I only want to see
How I'm to phrase my answer.
NATALIE (*to herself*). God of earth!
Now all is done with him!
THE PRINCE (*surprised*). Why, look at this!
As I'm alive, most curious! You must
Have overlooked the passage.
NATALIE. Why! Which one?
THE PRINCE. He calls on me to judge the case myself!
NATALIE. Well, what of that?
THE PRINCE. Gallant, i' faith, and fine!
Exactly what a noble soul would say!
NATALIE. His magnanimity is limitless!
But you, too, friend, do *your* part now, and write,

As he desires. All that is needed now
Is but the pretext, but the outer form.
As soon as those two words are in his hands,
Presto, the quarrel's at an end.
THE PRINCE (*putting the letter away*). No, dear!
I want to think it over till tomorrow.
NATALIE. Incomprehensible! Oh, what a change!
But why, but why?
THE PRINCE (*rising in passionate excitement*).
I beg you, ask me not!
You did not ponder what the letter said.
That he did me a wrong—and that's the crux—
I cannot tell him that. And if you force me
To give him answer in my present mood,
By God, it's this I'll tell him—"You did right!"
[*He sinks down beside the table again with folded arms, and stares at the letter.*]
NATALIE (*pale*).
You imbecile, you! What a thing to say!
[*She bends over him, deeply stirred.*]
THE PRINCE (*pressing her hand*).
Come, just a second now! I think—
[*He ponders.*]
NATALIE. What is it?
THE PRINCE. I'll know soon now what I shall write to him.
NATALIE (*painfully*).
Homburg!
THE PRINCE (*taking up his pen*).
Yes, dear. What it it?
NATALIE. Sweetest friend!
I prize the impulse that upstirred your heart;
But this I swear to you: the regiment
Has been detailed, whose muskets are to sound
At dawn the reconciling burial rite
Above the grave where your dead body lies.

If you cannot resist the law's decree,
Nor, noble as you are, do what he asks
Here in this letter to repeal it, then
I do assure you he will loftily
Accept the situation, and fulfil
The sentence on the morrow ruthlessly.

THE PRINCE (*writing*).
No matter!

NATALIE. What? No matter?

THE PRINCE. Let him do
What his soul bids. I must do what I must.

NATALIE (*approaching him frightened*).
Oh, terrible! You are not writing there?

THE PRINCE (*concluding*).
"Homburg!" And dated, "Fehrbellin, the twelfth."
So, it's all ready. Frank!
[*He closes and seals the letter.*]

NATALIE. Dear God in heaven!

THE PRINCE (*rising*).
Here, take this to the Castle to my liege!
[*The lackey goes out.*]
I will not face man who faces me
So nobly, with a knave's ignoble front!
Guilt, heavy guilt, upon my conscience weighs,
I fully do confess. Can he but grant
Forgiveness, when I contest for it,
I do not care a straw for any pardon.

NATALIE (*kissing him*).
This kiss, for me! And though twelve bullets made
You dust this instant, I could not resist
Caroling, sobbing, crying: Thus you please me!
However, since you follow your heart's lead,
I may be pardoned if I follow mine.
Count Reuss!
[*The footman opens the door. The* COUNT *enters.*]

Reuss. Here!
Natalie. Go, and bear the note I gave
Post-haste to Arnstein and to Colonel Kottwitz!
The regiment shall march, our liege directs.
Ere midnight I shall look to see it here!
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT V

Scene: A hall in the Castle.

Scene I

The Elector, *scantily clad, enters from the adjoining chamber, followed by* Count Truchsz, Count Hohenzollern, *and* Captain von der Golz. *Pages with lights.*

Elector. Kottwitz? And with the Princess's dragoons?
Here in the town?
Truchsz (*opening the window*). Indeed, my sovereign!
Drawn up before the Castle, here he is!
Elector. Well? Will you read the riddle, gentlemen?
Who called him hither?
Hohenzollern. I know not, my liege.
Elector. The place I set him at is known as Arnstein!
Make haste, some one, and go and bring him in.
Golz. He will appear forthwith, my sovereign.
Elector. Where is he?
Golz. At the City Hall, I hear,
Where the entire generality,
That bears obedience to your house, is met.
Elector. But why? What is the object?
Hohenzollern. I know not.
Truchsz. My prince and lord, will you vouchsafe that we
Likewise betake ourselves a moment thither?

ELECTOR. Whither? The City Hall?
HOHENZOLLERN. The lords' assemblage.
We gave our word of honor to appear.
ELECTOR (*after a short pause*).
You are dismissed!
GOLZ. Come, follow, gentlemen!
[*The officers go out.*]

SCENE II

The ELECTOR. *Later, two footmen.*

ELECTOR. Most curious! Were I the Dey of Tunis
I'd sound alarm at such a dubious move,
Lay on my desk despair's thin silken cord,
And at my palisaded castle-gate
Set up my heavy guns and howitzers.
But since it's just Hans Kottwitz from the Priegnitz
Who marches on me of his own sweet will
I'll treat the matter in the Mark's own way;
Of the three curls that gleam so silvery
On his old skull, I'll take firm hold of one
And lead him calmly with his squadrons twelve
To Arnstein, his headquarters, back again.
Why wake the city from its slumber thus?
[*He goes to the window a moment, then returns to the table and rings a bell. Two lackeys enter.*]
Do run below and ask, as for yourself,
What's doing in the City Hall.
1ST LACKEY. At once!
[*He goes out.*]
ELECTOR (*to the other*).
But you go now and fetch me my apparel.
[*The lackey goes and brings it. The* ELECTOR *attires himself and dons his princely insignia.*]

SCENE III

FIELD-MARSHAL DÖRFLING *enters. The others as before.*

DÖRFLING. Rebellion, my Elector!
ELECTOR (*still occupied with his clothes*). Calm yourself!
You know that I detest to have my room
Without a warning word, invaded thus.
What do you want?
MARSHAL. Forgive me! An affair
Of special consequence has brought me hither.
Unordered, Colonel Kottwitz moved his force
Into the city; hundred officers
Are gathered round him in the armor-hall.
From hand to hand a paper passes round
That purposes encroachment on your rights.
ELECTOR. I am informed of it. What can it be
Except a ferment friendly to the Prince
On whom the law has laid the sentence, death?
MARSHAL. 'Tis so, by God on high! You struck it right!
ELECTOR. Well, then, and good. My heart is in their midst.
MARSHAL. The rumor goes the maniacs intend
This very night to hand you their petition
Here in the Castle; and should you persist
In carrying out, irreconcilably,
The sentence — scarce I dare to bring you this! —
To liberate him from his bonds by force!
ELECTOR (*sombrely*).
Come now, who told you that?
MARSHAL. Who told me that?
The lady Retzow, cousin of my wife,
Whom you may trust. She spent this evening
In Bailiff Retzow's, in her uncle's house,
And heard some officers who came from camp
Brazenly utter this audacious plan.

ELECTOR. A man must tell me that ere I'll believe it.
I'll set this boot of mine before his house
To keep him safe from these young heroes' hands!

MARSHAL. My lord, I beg you, if it be your will,
To grant the Prince his pardon after all:
Fulfil it ere an odious deed be done.
You know that every army loves its hero.
Let not this spark which kindles in it now
Spread out and wax a wild consuming fire.
Nor Kottwitz nor the crowd he has convened
Are yet aware my faithful word has warned you.
Ere he appears, send back the Prince's sword,
Send it, as, after all, he has deserved.
One piece of chivalry the more you give
To history, and one misdeed the less.

ELECTOR. Concerning that I'd have to ask the Prince,
Who was not idly made a prisoner,
As you may know, nor idly may be freed.—
I'll see the gentlemen when they arrive.

MARSHAL (*to himself*).
Curse it! His armor's proof to every dart.

SCENE IV

Two lackeys enter, one with a letter in his hand. The others as before.

1ST LACKEY. Sir, Colonels Kottwitz, Hennings, Truchsz and others
Beg audience!

ELECTOR (*to the second lackey, as he takes the letter*).
This from the Prince of Homburg?

2D LACKEY. Indeed, your Highness.

ELECTOR. Who delivered it?

2D LACKEY. The Swiss on guard before the castle gate,
Who had it from the Prince's bodyguard.
[*The* ELECTOR *stands by the table, and reads; whereupon he turns and calls to a page.*]
Prittwitz! Bring me the warrant, bring it here.
And let me have the passport for the Swede's
Ambassador, Gustaf, the Count of Horn.
[*Exit the page.*]
[*To the first lackey.*]
Now Kottwitz and his retinue may come.

SCENE V

COLONEL KOTTWITZ *and* COLONEL HENNINGS, COUNT TRUCHSZ, COUNTS HOHENZOLLERN *and* SPARREN, COUNT REUSS, CAPTAIN VON DER GOLZ, STRANZ *and other officers enter. The others as before.*

KOTTWITZ (*bearing the petition*).
Permit me, my exalted sovereign,
Here in the name of all your soldiery
Most humbly to submit this document.
ELECTOR. Kottwitz, before I take it, tell me now
Who was it called you to this city here?
KOTTWITZ (*regarding him*).
With the dragoons?
ELECTOR. Ay, with your regiment!
I nominated Arnstein as your station.
KOTTWITZ. Sir! It was your behest that brought me hither.
ELECTOR. Eh? Let me see the order!
KOTTWITZ. Here, my liege.
ELECTOR (*reading*).
Signed: "Natalie." And dated: "Fehrbellin,
By order of my liege, my uncle Frederick."

KOTTWITZ. By God, my prince and lord, I will not hope
The order's news to you?

ELECTOR. No — understand —
Who was it who conveyed the order thither?

KOTTWITZ. Count Reuss!

ELECTOR (*after a momentary pause*).
What's more, your're welcome, very welcome!
You have been chosen with your squadrons twelve
To pay Prince Homburg, sentenced by the law,
The final honors of the morrow.

KOTTWITZ (*taken aback*). What,
My sovereign?

ELECTOR (*handing back the order*).
The regiment stands yet,
Benighted and befogged, outside the Castle?

KOTTWITZ. Pardon, the night —

ELECTOR. Why don't they go to quarters?

KOTTWITZ. My sovereign, they have gone. As you directed
They have found quarters in the city here.

ELECTOR (*with a turn toward the window*).
What? But a moment since — Well, by the gods!
You've found them stables speedily enough.
So much the better! Welcome, then, once more!
Come, say, what brings you here? What is your news?

KOTTWITZ. Sir, this petition from your loyal men.

ELECTOR. Come.

KOTTWITZ. But the words your lips have spoken strike
All my anticipations down to earth.

ELECTOR. Well, then, a word can lift them up again!
[*He reads.*]
" Petition, begging royal clemency
For our commandant, vitally accused,

The General, Prince Frederick Hessen-Homburg." *[To the officers.]*
A noble name, my lords! And not unworthy
Your coming in such numbers to its aid.
[He looks into the document again.]
By whom is the petition?

KOTTWITZ. By myself.

ELECTOR. The Prince has been apprized of what it holds?

KOTTWITZ. Not in the very faintest. In our midst
The matter was conceived and given birth.

ELECTOR. Grant me a moment's patience, if you please.
[He steps to the table and glances over the paper. Long pause.]
Hm! Curious! You ancient war-horse, you,
You plead the Prince's cause? You justify
His charging Wrangel ere I gave command?

KOTTWITZ. My sovereign, yes. That's what old Kottwitz does.

ELECTOR. You did not hold that notion on the field!

KOTTWITZ. I'd weighed the thing but ill, my sovereign.
I should have calmly yielded to the Prince
Who is most wonderfully versed in war.
The Swedes' left wing was wavering; on their right
Came reinforcements; had he been content
To bide your order, they'd have made a stand
With new intrenchments in the gullies there,
And never had you gained your victory.

ELECTOR. That's what it pleases you to presuppose!
I sent out Colonel Hennings, as you know,
To pounce upon and seize the knot of bridges
Held by the Swedes to cover Wrangel's rear.
If you'd not disobeyed my order, look,
Hennings had carried out the stroke as planned —
In two hours' time had set afire the bridges,
Planted his forces firmly on the Rhyn,

And Wrangel had been crushed with stump and stem
In ditches and morasses, utterly.

KOTTWITZ. It is the tyro's business, not yours,
To hunger after fate's supremest crown.
Until this hour you took what gift she gave.
The dragon that made desolate the Mark
Beneath your very nose has been repelled
With gory head! What could one day bring more?
What matters it if, for a fortnight yet,
Spent in the sand, he lies and salves his wounds?
We've learnt the art of conquering him, and now
Are full of zeal to make the most of it.
Give us a chance at Wrangel, like strong men,
Breast against breast once more; we'll make an end
And, down into the Baltic, down he goes!
They did not build Rome in a single day.

ELECTOR. What right have you, you fool, to hope for that,
When every mother's son is privileged
To jerk the battle-chariot's reins I hold?
Think you that fortune will eternally
Award a crown to disobedience?
I do not like a bastard victory,
The gutter-waif of chance; the law, look you,
My crown's progenitor, I will uphold,
For she shall bear a race of victories.

KOTTWITZ. My liege, the law, the highest and the best,
That shall be honored in your leaders' hearts—
Look, that is not the letter of your will!
It is the fatherland, it is the crown,
It is yourself, upon whose head it sits.
I beg you now, what matters it to you

What rule the foe fights by, as long as he
With all his pennons bites the dust once more?
The law that drubs him is the highest law!
Would you transform your fervid soldiery
Into a tool, as lifeless as the blade
That in your golden baldrick hangs inert?
Oh, empty spirit, stranger to the stars,
Who first gave forth such doctrine! Oh, the base,
The purblind statecraft, which because of one
Instance wherein the heart rode on to wrack,
Forgets ten others, in the whirl of life,
Wherein the heart alone has power to save!
Come, in the battle do I spill in dust
My blood for wages, money, say, or fame?
Faith, not a bit! It's all too good for that!
Why! I've my satisfaction and my joy,
Free and apart, in quiet solitude,
Seeing your splendor and your excellence,
The fame and crescence of your mighty name!
That is the wage for which I sold my heart!
Grant that, because of this unplanned success,
You broke the staff across the Prince's head,
And I somewhere twixt hill and dale at dawn
Should, shepherd-wise, steal on a victory
Unplanned as this, with my good squadrons, eh?—
By God, I were a very knave, did I
Not merrily repeat the Prince's act!
And if you spake, the law book in your hand:
"Kottwitz, you've forfeited your head!" I'd say:
I knew it, Sir; there, take it, there it is;
When with an oath I bound me, hide and hair,
Unto your crown, I left not out my head,
And I should give you nought but what was yours!

ELECTOR. You whimsical old gentleman, with you
I get nowhere! You bribe me with your tongue —
Me, with your craftily framed sophistries —
Me — and you know I hold you dear! Wherefore
I call an advocate to bear my side
And end our controversy.
[*He rings a bell. A footman enters.*]
Go! I wish
The Prince of Homburg hither brought from prison. [*Exit footman.*]
He will instruct you, be assured of that,
What discipline and what obedience be!
He sent me words, at least, of other pitch
Than this astute idea of liberty
You have rehearsed here like a boy to me.
[*He stands by the table again reading.*]

KOTTWITZ (*amazed*).
Fetch whom? Call whom?

HENNINGS. Himself?

TRUCHSZ. Impossible!

[*The officers group themselves, disquieted, and speak with one another.*]

ELECTOR. Who has brought forth this other document?

HOHENZOLL. I, my liege lord!

ELECTOR (*reading*).
"Proof that Elector Frederick
The Prince's act himself —" —Well, now, by heaven,
I call that nerve!
What! You dare say the cause of the misdeed
The Prince committed in the fight, am I!

HOHENZOLL. Yourself, my liege; I say it, Hohenzollern.

ELECTOR. Now then, by God, that beats the fairy-tales!
One man asserts that *he* is innocent,
The other that the guilty man am *I!* —
How will you demonstrate that thesis now?

HOHENZOLL. My lord, you will recall to mind that night
We found the Prince in slumber deeply sunk
Down in the garden 'neath the plantain trees.
He dreamed, it seemed, of victories on the morrow,
And in his hand he held a laurel-twig,
As if to test his heart's sincerity.
You took the wreath away, and smilingly
Twined round the leaves the necklace that you wore,
And to the lady, to your noble niece,
Both wreath and necklace, intertwining, gave.
At such a wondrous sight, the Prince, aflush,
Leaps to his feet; such precious things held forth
By such a precious hand he needs must clasp.
But you withdraw from him in haste, withdrawing
The Princess as you pass; the door receives you.
Lady and chain and laurel disappear,
And, solitary, holding in his hand
A glove he ravished from he knows not whom—
Lapped in the midnight he remains behind.

ELECTOR. What glove was that?

HOHENZOLLERN. My sovereign, hear me through!
The matter was a jest; and yet, of what
Deep consequence to him I learned erelong.
For when I slip the garden's postern through,
Coming upon him as it were by chance,
And wake him, and he calls his senses home,
The memory flooded him with keen delight.
A sight more touching scarce the mind could paint.
The whole occurrence, to the least detail,
He recapitulated, like a dream;

So vividly, he thought, he ne'er had dreamed,
And in his heart the firm assurance grew
That heaven had granted him a sign; that when
Once more came battle, God would grant him all
His inward eye had seen, the laurel-wreath,
The lady fair, and honor's linkèd badge.

ELECTOR. Hm! Curious! And then the glove?

HOHENZOLLERN. Indeed!
This fragment of his dream, made manifest,
At once dispels and makes more firm his faith.
At first, with large, round eye he looks at it:
The color's white, in mode and shape it seems
A lady's glove, but, as he spoke with none
By night within the garden whom, by chance,
He might have robbed of it — confused thereto
In his reflections by myself, who calls him
Up to the council in the palace, he
Forgets the thing he cannot comprehend,
And off-hand in his collar thrusts the glove.

ELECTOR. Thereupon?

HOHENZOLLERN. Thereupon with pen and tablet
He seeks the Castle, with devout attention
To take the orders from the Marshal's lips.
The Electress and the Princess, journey-bound,
By chance are likewise in the hall; but who
Shall gauge the uttermost bewilderment
That takes him, when the Princess turns to find
The very glove he thrust into his collar!
The Marshal calls again and yet again
'The Prince of Homburg!' 'Marshal, to command!'
He cries, endeavoring to collect his thoughts;
But he, ringed round by marvels — why, the thunders
Of heaven might have fallen in our midst —
[*He pauses.*]

ELECTOR. It was the Princess' glove?
HOHENZOLLERN. It was, indeed!
[*The* ELECTOR *sinks into a brown study.*]
A stone is he; the pencil's in his hand,
And he stands there, and seems a living man;
But consciousness, as by a magic wand,
Is quenched within him; not until the morrow,
As down the lines the loud artillery
Already roars, does he return to life,
Asking me: Say, what was it Dörfling said
Last night in council, that applied to me?
MARSHAL. Truly, my liege, that tale I can indorse.
The Prince, I call to mind, took in no word
Of what I said; distraught I've seen him oft,
But never yet in such degree removed
From blood and bone, never, as on that night.
ELECTOR. Now then, if I make out your reasoning,
You pile your climax on my shoulders thus:
Had I not dangerously made a jest
Of this young dreamer's state, he had remained
Guiltless, in council had not roamed the clouds,
Nor disobedient proved upon the field.
Eh? Eh? Is that the logic?
HOHENZOLLERN. My liege lord,
I trust the filling of the gaps to you.
ELECTOR. Fool that you are, you addlepate! Had you
Not called me to the garden, I had not,
Following a whim of curiosity,
Made harmless fun of this somnambulist.
Wherefore, and quite with equal right, I hold
The cause of his delinquency were you!—
The delphic wisdom of my officers!
HOHENZOLL. Enough, my sovereign! I am assured,
My words fell weightily upon your heart.

Scene VI

An officer enters. The others as before.

Officer. My lord, the Prince will instantly appear.
Elector. Good, then! Let him come in.
Officer. Two minutes, sir!
He but delayed a moment on the way
To beg a porter ope the graveyard gate.
Elector. The graveyard?
Officer. Ay, my sovereign.
Elector. But why?
Officer. To tell the truth, my lord, I do not know.
It seemed he wished to see the burial-vault
That your behest uncovered for him there.
[*The commanders group themselves and talk together.*]
Elector. No matter! When he comes, let him come in!
[*He steps to the table again and glances at the papers.*]
Truchsz. The watch is bringing in Prince Homburg now.

Scene VII

Enter the Prince of Homburg. *An officer and the watch. The others as before.*

Elector. Young Prince of mine, I call you to my aid!
Here's Colonel Kottwitz brings this document
In your behalf, look, in long column signed
By hundred honorable gentlemen.
The army asks your liberty, it runs,
And will not tolerate the court's decree.
Come, read it and inform yourself, I beg.
[*He hands him the paper.*]
The Prince (*casts a glance at the document, turns and looks about the circle of officers*).
Kottwitz, old friend, come, let me clasp your hand!

You give me more than on the day of battle
I merited of you. But now, post-haste,
Go, back again to Arnstein whence you came,
Nor budge at all. I have considered it;
The death decreed to me I will accept!
[*He hands over the paper to him.*]

Kottwitz (*distressed*).
No, nevermore, my Prince! What are you saying?

Hohenzoll. He wants to die —

Truchsz. He shall not, must not die!

Various Officers (*pressing forward*).
My lord Elector! Oh, my sovereign! Hear us!

The Prince. Hush! It is my inflexible desire!
Before the eyes of all the soldiery
I wronged the holy code of war; and now
By my free death I wish to glorify it.
My brothers, what's the one poor victory
I yet may snatch from Wrangel worth to you
Against the triumph o'er the balefullest
Of foes within, that I achieve at dawn —
The insolent and disobedient heart.
Now shall the alien, seeking to bow down
Our shoulders 'neath his yoke, be crushed; and, free,
The man of Brandenburg shall take his stand
Upon the mother soil, for it is his —
The splendor of her meads alone for him!

Kottwitz (*moved*).
My son! My dearest friend! What shall I name you?

Truchsz. God of the world!

Kottwitz. Oh, let me kiss your hand!
[*They press round him.*]

The Prince (*turning toward the* Elector).
But you, my liege, who bore in other days
A tenderer name I may no longer speak,

Before your feet, stirred to my soul, I kneel.
Forgive, that with a zeal too swift of foot
I served your cause on that decisive day;
Death now shall wash me clean of all my guilt.
But give my heart, that bows to your decree,
Serene and reconciled, this comfort yet:
To know your breast resigns all bitterness —
And, in the hour of parting, as a proof,
One favor more, compassionately grant.

ELECTOR. Young hero, speak! What is it you desire?
I pledge my word to you, my knightly honor,
It shall be granted you, whate'er it be!

THE PRINCE. Not with your niece's hand, my sovereign,
Purchase the peace of Gustaf Karl! Expel,
Out of the camp, expel the bargainer
Who made this ignominious overture.
Write your response to him in cannon-shots!

ELECTOR (*kissing his brow*).
As you desire then. With this kiss, my son,
That last appeal I grant. Indeed, wherein
Now have we need of such a sacrifice
That war's ill-fortune only could compel?
Why, in each word that you have spoken, buds
A victory that strikes the foeman low!
I'll write to him, the plighted bride is she
Of Homburg, dead because of Fehrbellin;
With his pale ghost, before our flags a-charge,
Let him do battle for her, on the field!
[*He kisses him again and draws him to his feet.*]

THE PRINCE. Behold, now have you given me life indeed!
Now every blessing on you I implore
That from their cloudy thrones the seraphim
Pour forth exultant over hero-heads.
Go, and make war, and conquer, oh, my liege,
The world that fronts you — for you merit it!

ELECTOR. Guards! Lead the prisoner back to his cell!

SCENE VIII

NATALIE *and the* ELECTRESS *appear in the doorway, followed by ladies-in-waiting. The others as before.*

NATALIE. Mother! Decorum! Can you speak that word?
In such an hour there's none but just to love him —
My dear, unhappy love!
THE PRINCE (*turning*). Now I shall go!
TRUCHSZ (*holding him*).
No, nevermore, my Prince!
[*Several officers step in his way.*]
THE PRINCE. Take me away!
HOHENZOLL. Liege, can your heart —
THE PRINCE (*tearing himself free*).
You tyrants, would you drag me
In fetters to my execution-place?
Go! I have closed my reckoning with this world. [*He goes out under guard.*]
NATALIE (*on the* ELECTRESS' *breast*).
Open, O earth, receive me in your deeps.
Why should I look upon the sunlight more?

SCENE IX

The persons, as in the preceding scene, with the exception of the PRINCE OF HOMBURG.

MARSHAL. God of earth! Did it have to come to that?
[*The* ELECTOR *speaks in a low voice to an officer.*]
KOTTWITZ (*frigidly*).
My sovereign, after all that has occurred
Are we dismissed?
ELECTOR. Not for the present, no!
I'll give you notice when you are dismissed!
[*He regards him a moment straightly and steadily; then takes the papers which the page has brought him from the table and turns to the* FIELD-MARSHAL.]

This passport, take it, for Count Horn the Swede.
Tell him it is my cousin's wish, the Prince's,
Which I have pledged myself to carry out.
The war begins again in three days' time!
[*Pause. He casts a glance at the death warrant.*]
Judge for yourselves, my lords. The Prince of Homburg
Through disobedience and recklessness
Of two of my best victories this year
Deprived me, and indeed impaired the third.
Now that he's had his schooling these last days
Come, will you risk it with him for a fourth?

KOTTWITZ *and* TRUCHSZ (*helter-skelter*).
What, my adored — my worshipped — What, my liege? —

ELECTOR. Will you? Will you?

KOTTWITZ. Now, by the living God,
He'd watch you standing on destruction's brink
And never twitch his sword in your behalf,
Or rescue you unless you gave command.

ELECTOR (*tearing up the death warrant*).
So, to the garden! Follow me, my friends!

SCENE X

The Castle with the terrace leading down into the garden, as in ACT I. It is night, as then.— The PRINCE OF HOMBURG, *with bandaged eyes, is led in through the lower garden-wicket, by* CAPTAIN STRANZ. *Officers with the guard. In the distance one can hear the drumming of the death-march.*

THE PRINCE. All art thou mine now, immortality!
Thou glistenest through the veil that blinds mine eyes
With that sun's glow that is a thousand suns.
I feel bright pinions from my shoulders start;

STATUE OF THE GREAT ELECTOR

Sculptor, ANDREAS SCHLÜTER

Through mute, ethereal spaces wings my soul;
And as the ship, borne outward by the wind,
Sees the bright harbor sink below the marge,
Thus all my being fades and is submerged.
Now I distinguish colors yet and forms,
And now — all life is fog beneath my feet.

[*The* PRINCE *seats himself on the bench which stands about the oak in the middle of the open space. The* CAPTAIN *draws away from him and looks up toward the terrace.*]

How sweet the flowers fill the air with odor!
D'you smell them?

STRANZ (*returning to him*). They are gillyflowers and pinks.

THE PRINCE. How come the gillyflowers here?

STRANZ. I know not.
It must have been some girl that planted them.
Come, will you have a bachelor's button?

THE PRINCE. Thanks!
When I get home I'll have it put in water.

SCENE XI

The ELECTOR *with the laurel-wreath, about which the golden chain is twined, the* ELECTRESS, PRINCESS NATALIE, FIELD-MARSHAL DÖRFLING, COLONEL KOTTWITZ, HOHENZOLLERN, GOLZ, *and others. Ladies-in-waiting, officers and boys bearing torches appear on the castle terrace.* HOHENZOLLERN *steps to the balustrade and with a handkerchief signals to* CAPTAIN STRANZ, *whereupon the latter leaves the* PRINCE OF HOMBURG *and speaks a few words with the guards in the background.*

THE PRINCE. What is the brightness breaking round me, say!

STRANZ (*returning to him*).
My Prince, will you be good enough to rise?

THE PRINCE. What's coming?

STRANZ. Nothing that need wake your fear.
I only wish to free your eyes again.

THE PRINCE. Has my ordeal's final hour struck?

STRANZ (*as he draws the bandage from the* PRINCE'S *eyes*).
Indeed! Be blest, for well you merit it!
[*The* ELECTOR *gives the wreath, from which the chain is hanging, to the* PRINCESS, *takes her hand and leads her down from the terrace. Ladies and gentlemen follow. Surrounded by torches, the* PRINCESS *approaches the* PRINCE, *who looks up in amazement; sets the wreath on his head, the chain about his neck and presses his hand to her breast. The* PRINCE *tumbles in a faint.*]

NATALIE. Heaven! The joy has killed him!

HOHENZOLLERN (*raising him*). Help, bring help!

ELECTOR. Let him be wakened by the cannons' thunder!
[*Artillery fire. A march. The Castle is illuminated.*]

KOTTWITZ. Hail, hail, the Prince of Homburg!

OFFICERS. Hail, hail, hail!

ALL. The victor of the field of Fehrbellin!
[*Momentary silence.*]

THE PRINCE. No! Say! Is it a dream?

KOTTWITZ. A dream, what else?

SEVERAL OFFICERS. To arms! to arms!

TRUCHSZ. To war!

DÖRFLING. To victory!

ALL. In dust with all the foes of Brandenburg!